BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Esther (Jackson) Bader, 69, retired Matson Navigation Company employee

". . . we all knew each other so much because we went to school with the kids. The children from Ibaraki Store and Aoki Store we all went to Waikīkī School. So we got to know one another real well. And then, later on, when I got married, and I had my kids, they'd go down there."

Esther (Jackson) Bader, part-Hawaiian, was born on August 22, 1917, in Honolulu, O'ahu. Her mother, Hannah Akuhuna Jackson, was a homemaker; her father, Alonso Jackson, a glazier for Lewers and Cooke.

Esther Bader attended Waikīkī Elementary, Washington Intermediate, and McKinley High School. Prior to and during World War II, she worked at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. Following the war, she was employed by Castle and Cooke, and later, Matson Navigation Company.

A lifelong resident of Waikīkī, Bader is well-acquainted with the Hamohamo area and its residents. Retired since 1983, she and her husband, Albert Bader, Sr., are active in senior citizens' activities.

Tape No. 13-9-1-85

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Esther (Jackson) Bader (EB)

March 6, 1985

Waikīkī, O'ahu

BY: Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mrs. Esther Jackson Bader at her home in Waikīkī, Honolulu, Hawai'i on March 6, 1985. The interviewer is Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay. Mrs. Bader, for the first question, what was your mother's name?

EB: Maiden name? My mother's maiden name was Hannah Akuhuna.

MK: And tell me something about your mother's family's background.

EB: Well, there again is another thing because she never talked about them--to us, anyway. All I know is that her father was Chinese, mother was Hawaiian. She was born and raised on Maui. My grandfather went back to China and that was the last my mother knew of him. So then, she was brought up by another Hawaiian family, which, again, I don't even know what their names are. So this is what makes it hard trying to go back to her side of the family because the Chinese portion, that was the end when he went back. She had a brother and she had a sister. But they're now all gone. Everybody's all gone. They were dead before I was old enough to understand because I don't ever remember seeing them, an uncle or the aunty.

MK: What was your father's name?

EB: My father's name was Alonzo Jackson.

MK: Tell me about your father's background.

EB: Well, my dad again, he, too, was born and raised on Maui. His father, from what we understand, came in on the whaling ships in Lahaina, and met and married this Hawaiian woman. They lived up in Makawao. So they only had my dad, who was the only child, and then, came down to Wailuku to live with a relative right in Wailuku. So, that's as far as I know about my dad. He died when I was only fourteen.

MK: What do you know about how your mother and father got together?

EB: We never asked. That's the kind of thing that I feel is sad that I never bothered to ask. You just accept it. There's your daddy and there's your mother. So, nothing else is said. And then, when you lose one, all the questions, if you have any, you feel you can't do anything. So, you never bother anymore. But my mother and dad moved to Honolulu. See, so, they came here, and I was born here in Honolulu.

MK: When were you born?

EB: August 22, 1917.

MK: Where exactly in Honolulu were you born?

EB: I don't really know. My birth certificate shows Smith Lane. Smith Lane, from my understanding from my mother, is the upper part of Fort Street. I think that's where the freeway is now or Vineyard Street or whatever. And that's where I was born before coming to Waikīkī.

MK: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

EB: None. I'm an only child. Like my dad, I'm an only child. I have an adopted sister was my first cousin. She's no longer alive.

MK: When did your family first move to Waikīkī?

EB: I don't have anything concrete but my mother and dad bought this place in 1918. (They paid $1,500 for 10,000 square feet, plus a house with two bedrooms with a wide lanai.) So I must have been a couple of months old when they bought this place and moved over here. My mother claims that the reason they bought this area was because of my sister, who was six years older than I. Going to school for her would mean just crossing the street because Waikīkī School was right across the street over here.

MK: Where was that first family home located exactly? What road, what street was it on?

EB: The address to our house was 2575 Hamohamo Road. That's the only address I have ever had except now it's 2575 Kūhiō Avenue, where the numbers haven't changed.

MK: About when in time did Hamohamo Road become Kūhiō Avenue?

EB: I don't know for sure, but I know that I went to Washington Intermediate School and graduated from there in 1932. That means if it was seventh, eighth and ninth, that would be '32, '31, '30. Around '29, but I'm not sure.

MK: You know, when you think back to your small kid days when you were going to elementary school, try to describe what your house looked like at 2575 Hamohamo Road.

EB: Okay. We had a big house. It was high. When I say high, it was about eleven or twelve steps before you hit the verandah. Our verandah was the type that went around the house, the real old-fashioned type of thing, and it was painted grey. Isn't that funny how you remember those things? The house was grey, but we had shutters on our windows that were painted green. And then, later on, my mother, who was asthmatic, wanted to screen off a portion of the porch so that she could sleep out there and have a lot of air. That's why it cut our lanai--our verandah, in those days they didn't call it lanai. But our whole front was all verandah. Then we'd climb up the stairs, you know, to get upstairs. The stairs were wide, see. I don't know, about eight feet long. You know, those were the old-fashioned type with the screen door. But that would be about it.

And at the time, we had an empty lot on the side of us which was a total footage of 10,000 square feet. But we went sideways on Hamohamo Road. Then, later on, after my dad died, we sold the empty lot portion. Then, we lived on the other half of it because the house was on that property. Then, later on, we bought the one back of us, which is this one on this side, which made our property run from Hamohamo [Road] to Cartwright [Road], which is back here. That's the way we (did it).

MK: You know, that original house, you mentioned it was a big house. How many rooms did it have?

EB: Our living room was about. . . . What would you say, Dad? How big was our living room to the old house?

Albert Bader, Sr. [EB's husband]: Oh, big. I'd say, about fourteen by twenty [feet].

EB: And it went one way, fourteen by twenty [feet] this way. Then we had a dining room that I would say would be about twelve by twelve [feet]. We had a kitchen about the same size. We had a bathroom about the same size, you know, with that old-fashioned toilet that had a box on the top and you pull a chain for water? We only had two bedrooms, though, but they were two good-sized bedrooms. It was just my mother and dad in the front room, and my sister and I in the back room.

MK: In those days, how was the kitchen equipped?

EB: Well, here again, I'm saying this because I think we were the only ones, and yet somebody else might have had it. My dad was a glazier for Lewers & Cooke. Where everybody else was earning forty dollars and thirty dollars a month, he was earning $130 a month. So, we had the first radio console, we had the first gas stove, and we had the

first refrigerator [in the neighborhood]. But it was being bought one at a time. It wasn't the kind that you just go in and say, "Well, I'm going to do all of this for my kitchen and get it all done." So, that's the way we had it. And we had a car, but the car was a Buick. See, so, I mean right there, it shows the difference. My dad would get paid every Saturday. So, Saturday, we'd go Downtown to pick him up because that was also payday, and then go down to the market and buy everything you could take home with you. But that's my background, where there was no worry about where you're going to get your next meal.

However, I had a mother that was a terrific cook. She never thought about budgeting. I think that's a good word for her. She never thought about budgeting. So, come Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, oh gosh, we're right up there with all the best there is. Then it comes the next day, then we're down to a little. By the time we hit Saturday, we're just making it because she didn't care. When I say things about her budgeting, she was the type that if she told you to come on a certain day because she was going to pay you whatever she owed you for whatever, and you don't come that day, you don't get the money because she'll spend it. And then, you'll come two days later, she says, "Well, I don't have the money." She says, "I've already spent it. I told you to come on a certain day. You didn't come. So, I spent the money."

I think, knowing that she was that way, had made me very conscious of budgeting. Because I didn't want to have that. You know, have the collect[or]--not really a collector but the salesman or whoever [ask for a delinquent payment]. Those days, you buy it from a salesman, he comes and picks up the money. Because nobody had a checking account. Nobody knew what it was like to go and mail your checks out to pay your bills. You either go down and pay it yourself or they come to the house and pick it up. If she says come Monday, and you don't come Monday, well, you just out of luck for this week. You got to wait until next payday. So, that's my mother. And my dad just let her do everything. He never bothered about anything. Just go down and pick him up, and go down to Chinatown and have chop suey for lunch, and go to the market and pick up all of your things, and then come home.

MK: Now, I want you to kind of still think about that same time period and try to give me a general description of the other types of houses in the neighborhood.

EB: They were more or less the same, maybe not as big. Gee, it's hard to describe it now. It would be just like, you know what the Hicks houses look like or the Island Builders or what's it. That type of house would be what it is. Because Mama-san [Miyo Asuka, EB's neighbor] and them, we had a little Japanese court right here. I don't know what they call it. So, she [Miyo Asuka] had one, two, she had three--she had four houses in there, plus her own house which she built. Her house was the biggest house but the rest were a regular two-bedroom cottages. You had a small little porch, you

go in. Your kitchen is small. But all of it is useable. You know, it isn't anything fancy. You go in and you pull the string for the light or you turn the knob or whatever. There's no such thing as switches on a wall. But they were, I would say, about that type.

MK: Were there any other unusual type structures or buildings in the neighborhood?

EB: No, no. They were all wooden structures. But our house had a tin roof. Every other house, I think, now that I'm talking about it, I don't remember the other houses having tin roofs. Did they, Dad?

AB: All the wood houses had tin roofs.

EB: Oh, yeah? See. Because of the rain and they didn't want to be fixing their roofs all the time because they didn't have the money to do that. So we all had tin roofs just like Hilo. But Hilo, it's because of the amount of rain. We had that over here, too, but not too many. But it's the kind that when it rains it just lulls you right off to sleep, that dripping on the tin.

MK: You know, starting with your block where you lived--Hamohamo, Paoakalani, Cartwright [Roads], that block--tell me who your neighbors were, and anything that really stands out in your mind about some of the neighbors.

EB: Well, I think, first of all, the neighbors were all Hawaiian people, with a few Japanese people in [residential] camps. Now, take it from our place right here and go towards Paoakalani [Avenue]. The next property would be where [Miyo] Asuka is, and she had, I think, about four Japanese families there in a court-like. Then there was three cottages in the back, one in the front, and then her house took the other portion there. Okay, that was her place. Next to that was the Ewalikos' place.

AB: They had a big house.

EB: The Ewalikos had a big house, too, with a stone steps going upstairs and all of the stone settings, you know, like that going up there. Between Mama-san's [Miyo Asuka's] house and their big house, they had like a duplex, rentals, and that was there. And then, they had a big yard. And then, a house. There was another Japanese family that lived there and I can't remember the name. I only remember one girl's Japanese name. Because at that time, all the Japanese girls all had Japanese names. See, they never had Esther or Carol or whatever.

AB: A-chan, Mi-chan.

EB: (Chuckles) A-chan, and Mi-chan, and Sumie, and all of those names. That was the cute thing. Because long after, if we would meet, like

say for today, and if we haven't seen each other for a long time, I don't know them by their English name. I'll call. If I call them, I'm going to use their Japanese name. They stop, then they'll say, "Boy, you could sure tell how long ago you knew me." That's when we were all in your teens, you know, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, somewhere around there.

So, right after the Ewaliko family's place, and I think they had something like 15,000 square feet of property. Mama-san [Miyo Asuka] has ten [thousand square feet]. We had ten [thousand square feet], but our ten went this way and we didn't have it on Cartwright [Road] side at that time. And then, Ewalikos' house, and then next to Ewalikos was the Williams family. And her name, we used to call her Vicky. Next to her was the Kaawakauo family. Mrs. [Emma] Kaawakauo was a teacher at Waikiki School, and her maiden name was Kaeo. Then next to their family, the Kaawakauo family, was the Parker family. That's the one with that Mrs. Hayselden, Enid Parker, and George--not George--Parker, and the other older brother that we called "Honey." I never ever found out what his real name was. We all called him, you know, by nicknames. I never saw a place that had more nicknames. You say, "Well, chee, I met so-and-so." I don't know who that is. Then when you see the person, "Oh, for goodness sake. I sure know him but I know him as such-and-such."

Then if we're going around the block and coming down towards Cartwright [Road], it was the Parker [family] at the corner, then next to them, I think, it used to be the Kaeos used to live there. Next to the Kaeos going towards the beach was another place there, and that woman there used to have a day care center. She used to take care of children. But I don't remember finding out what her name was, whether she owned the place or whether she was renting it, or what it was. Next to that, at the corner of Cartwright and Paoakalani [Roads] was the De Rego family. Okay, so now we're coming down on Cartwright [Road]. There again was another Japanese camp, the Matsuzawas, that's Gertrude [Matsuzawa] and them. After the Matsuzawas who had their own little 5,000 square feet lot, there was, I think, another (Japanese court) 15,000 square feet property or maybe ten [thousand square feet] on Cartwright [Road]. Next to them was the Spencers' property. After the Spencers, it was the Harris'. I think it's Gay Harris that used to own the property right next to us down here on Cartwright [Road] side. And then, this property on Cartwright [Road] side was owned by a William Donnelly. After Donnelly, it was Kosaki. After Kosaki, it was Rasmussens. I'm filling in [interviewer's map of neighborhood]? (Chuckles)

MK: So, that's your whole block?

EB: That's the block coming this way. Because across the street [Hamohamo Road] was the Padeken family. And then, the school that went towards Paoakalani [Road], Waikīkī School, and then there were two Japanese families over there. And then, Richards' place, "Buckwheat"'s [i.e., Mervin Richards'] place. After "Buckwheat"'s place, it was the Joy

family that was up until Paoakalani [Road]. Then if you go up the street on Paoakalani [Road], then it would be another Joy family that started off with a Punohu. One of the Punohu girls married a Joy. And next to them was a Bishaw. Next to the Bishaw--we're going up now--was Edith Kiakahi.

And then, we're on Kāneloa Road now. So when you come down Kāneloa Road going towards Diamond Head, after Kiakahis, it was again a rental by the same Kaeo family that was living on Paoakalani [Road]. I think they were renting. I don't know who owned that property over there. After the Kaeo family's house was another house that was owned by a Chinese family with very little Hawaiian but the last name was Lau. There was "China" Lau, "Didi" Lau, Margaret Lau, and another sister that used to live right there. And from there on was the [Waikīkī] School. So then the school comes all the way down here on this side. And then, there's that Mirikitani that owned the corner lot of Makee Road and Kāneloa Road. That's where that condo is right now, that Parkview.

MK: Okay. Say, if we were going to ma kai of your block.

EB: Yeah, that's on Cartwright [Road].

MK: Right. Cartwright, Paoakalani and Lemon [Roads]. Who lived on that . . .

EB: Okay, now, let's come on Cartwright [Road] from Paoakalani [Road] coming Diamond Head [i.e., east]. Right at the corner was the family called the Akaka family. Next to the Akaka family was a DeFries family. Next to the DeFries family--see, they owned a big lot. It went down, you know, like so. And then, I don't know whether they sold it or whether it was another lot to it. It was a Mr. and Mrs. [Eddie] Lam. The reason I remember that is because she was my fourth-grade teacher at Waikīkī School. Her husband had service stations. He must have had anywhere from two to four. I don't know how many. But it used to be right at the corner of Kalākaua [Avenue] and King [Street] on the ma uka side. Okay, so that would be the Lam family. And then, there were Japanese families again. Then after the Japanese family there was another family called the. . . . Buddy, what's that last name? Oh, the Kelley family. After the Kelley family there was a Japanese family again. And then, this whole corner over here were all cottages, all rental cottages, before this hotel bought it out. And then, when you go around the corner, go down Kapahulu [Avenue] to Lemon Road, then you had the Widemann family. And then you're on Lemon Road. Then I'm lost. What was "Big George"'s family name over there?

AB: Kawaiahao.

EB: He said Kawaiahao family.

MK: How about the Williams and Manu families?

EB: That's on Lemon [Road]. Okay, now, if you go down Paoakalani [Road], the first one is Akaka. Next one to Akaka was the Manu family. They were at the corner. See, the Akakas had a big lot there. Now, that is also a condo called the Scandia Towers. Next to Scandia Towers was Manu. And that was right at the corner of Lemon and Paoakalani [Roads]. Then when you go into Lemon [Road], then you have the Bishaws down there on the other side of the street where Jackie [i.e., Jack Bishaw] and them could verify that. And then, on the Manu side would be another family. See, now, here again, we go into nicknames. We always called this boy "Bayaw." Not that he was Filipino or anything, but that was his nickname. And he had the property right behind of the Manu family's property. No, there was Manu, and a Japanese family, and then this boy we called "Bayaw." But his last name was Williams, also.

And then, there was Japanese. That [Dr. Tsutomu] Sasaki, the dentist. And there was another [unrelated Sasaki], "Dixie." We called him "Dixie." And he was a Sasaki, too. They were all on Lemon Road on the ma uka side. And another Japanese. And then you hit that Kawaiahao family. And then, you hit the Widemann family, and then you're back on Kapahulu [Avenue] again. So if you cross the street on Lemon Road where the Waikīkī Grand Hotel is now, there was a Japanese family. And they owned a big store up in Iwilei someplace that they used to sell pipes, and plumbing fixtures. I don't know what you call that type of store.

MK: Was the name Ozaki?

EB: Ozaki, yes. Yes, yes, yes. That's the name.

AB: Ozaki Store. Down in town.

EB: That was theirs. Okay, so, Ozaki was there. And we're going back on Lemon [Road] now. So, Ozaki, and then you had the Karratti family over there. And then, there were several places there that was up that was rentals. You know, when I was a young kid, my mother never let us get out and get away, and stay away too far from the house. This is where you lived. You stay in your yard and no going all over the neighborhood. So, I know this area, but when we get down further, I wouldn't know it very well, except to go to the store, and my mother sent me to the store. We had to go down to Ibaraki Store. Then I'd go down, go straight down Paoakalani [Road]. But on one side we had a lot of Japanese camps on the 'Ewa side of Paoakalani [Road]. And on this side we had all the Hawaiian families. So right at the corner was the Bishaw family. After the Bishaw was Hawaiian Village.

MK: What was the name of that Hawaiian village?

EB: [Lalani] Hawaiian Village. That was the place where they used to have programs, and have luaus for tourists and all that.

MK: Who operated it?

EB: Mossmans. The Mossman family. I don't know whether they---I think they owned the property over there or a portion of it, anyway. But it used to come right up to the Bishaws' place. This is cute. They had a six-foot fence. Every night we could tell whenever they were going to have a program because they have all the torches on. So we'd climb on the fence and sit up there to watch the program. Well, one night, the whole fence fell down with all of us sitting on it. And nobody ever went back. I didn't know who fixed it. Either Bishaws had to fix the fence or Mossmans had to fix the fence. But the Mossmans owned it over there--at least, I think they did. Next to them, now we're going Diamond Head [i.e., east] on Kalākaua [Avenue]. The next one would be the Lemon family. And then, after that, it was the Cunha family. C-U-N-H-A. The Cunha family was at the corner of Kalākaua and Kapahulu [Avenues]. They came down Kapahulu [Avenue]. And there was another owner there.

What was that gal that lived in that cottage down there, Dad? She was a good friend with Eva Hart and all of them? Oh, gosh. Next to Ozaki's place. Right where ABC Store is now. I don't remember the name. "Girly" Hart and her were relatives but I can't remember . . . . Robinson.

MK: You know, going back to that Hawaiian Village, would you be able to explain to me how that Hawaiian Village operated?

EB: Well, they operated like a resort. You know, Mrs. Mossman used to teach the hula. And her husband and them would have little crafts going on in there. The tourists would come in and walk through the grounds because they had a big area. They showed them how they're going kālua the pig, and where it was. They showed them the different island fruits. They had hula lessons because they had two daughters that danced. They put on their own program, and they had tourists there all the time.

MK: When was it operating? About when?

EB: Gee. Was it before the war or after the war [i.e., World War II]? Lalani Hawaiian Village? (Before) the war. They also had houses in there that they were renting [to others].

AB: Yeah, they had cottages.

EB: I don't know how they ever managed to do that, but I think they just worked it around, got it over here, and then everybody would go around. They had a trail for you to walk through. They had hau trees and everything. It really looked nice. But there again, that didn't pan out very well.

MK: Now, say that you crossed Paoakalani [Road] from the [Lalani] Hawaiian Village, what would you see on Kalākaua [Avenue] when you crossed the street?

EB: Okay, the corner store was Ibaraki [Store]. Next to that store was

a dry-cleaning, Tomomitsu's place. Who was next to Tomomitsu's? Because there were two dry cleaners over there. One is Kūhiō [Cleaners], and one was Tomomitsu's. And then, there was Tahara [Unique Cafe]. But way, way before that, there was a Chinese laundry over there. They were the ones that had a wagon with a horse that used to come around here and pick up laundry. I also remember a wagon delivering poi. See, in the back of Ibaraki Store was just a big open space where water used to come all the way in. There was a lot of coral and very little houses. It was trees and things growing back there.

The old man [i.e., Chinese launderer] used to put his wagon in there and the horse. Now, whether he rented or just. . . . You know, anybody did anything and nobody paid any attention. So comes Halloween night, we go and get the old man's wagon, all of us kids, and we'd push it down the street, and go and get papayas and cut things out, and then hang it on the side, and do all of that, you know. That old man would get so mad, he'd come chasing us down the street. So, naturally, we all run to hide. We don't want him to catch us because whoever he catch, our parents are going to hear about it. Because they don't spank you. They just drag you right home, then you get it from your mother and your father. But we did that every year.

The old laundry Chinese guys, they all wore that three-quarter pants, you know, that muslin type of pants, and a white T-shirt with a V-neck. Funny, how that thing just stays in your mind. And their laundry was right on Kalākaua [Avenue].

MK: By what name did you call those Chinese laundry men?

EB: I don't know. Nobody ever bothered to look at the name. Because we had to pass that laundry to get to Tahara's first restaurant. See, he was (close) on ('Ōhua Avenue) side. And then, for some reason, he ended up on this side, (Paoakalani Avenue). The same thing goes for Aoki Store at the corner of 'Ōhua and Kalākaua [Avenues]. It used to be on Paoakalani [Road]. Ibaraki was on the other side. So, for some reason, these two switched places. You know, there again, nobody asked. The Tahara girls would understand maybe if you can get to the oldest one. She might know why they switched places.

MK: You know, you have these two stores, Ibaraki Store and Aoki Store. What kinds of good did they sell? I mean, they're so close to each other.

EB: Groceries. You know, fruits, canned stuff, ice cream, and. . . . Well, like a country store.

AB: Vegetables, everything.

EB: Vegetables, fruits, and all set up in boxes. You know, like going down to Kaka'ako and seeing the grocery stores. That's the way it was.

MK: In those days, was there credit being offered to the neighborhood?

EB: No. That was purely cash. Not like the plantation stores, you know, where you go in and charge. No. But then, we all knew each other so much because we went to school with the kids. The children from Ibaraki Store and Aoki Store, we all went to Waikīkī [Elementary] School. So we got to know one another real well. And then, later on, when I got married, and I had my kids, they'd go down there. My oldest boy, or one of them anyway, would go right into the ice box--you know, the thing for ice cream--and take one out. And then, I go down to the [Ibaraki] Store, and then Tom, one of the sons, would say, "Esther, you owe me five cents."

I say, "What for?"

He say, "Oh, Paddy came down and he took an ice cream."

I thought, "That monkey. Just wait till I get home." In the meantime, I pay him. But they never stopped the kids because they know that the parents will go along with it. As long as you say, "Well, who came in?"

They say, "Oh, well, so-and-so came in."

I say, "All right." So, then you pay him what you owe him. But it's usually only five or ten cents.

They [Ibaraki and Aoki] sold the same thing, except that Ibaraki was a smaller store than Aoki. Aoki at one time, his customers were all the rich people like the Dillinghams, the Cookes, the Magoons, that all lived out at Diamond Head. They would call in their order.

(Telephone rings. Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

EB: They would deliver all of that. They would order the choice things. You know, choice meats. We would all (buy) hamburger and stew, and they would order roast beef, and steaks, and things like that. But that was the difference. If there was any improvement, Aoki always did it first. Like starting with frozen foods, frozen vegetables, and all of that. They were the ones. But Ibaraki stayed. And all of the rest of the neighborhood would go to Ibaraki because it was cheaper than going to Aoki, even if it was just a matter of five cents or two cents. You know, when money is that important to you, naturally, you're going to feel that way. So, that to me was the difference. But it was a grocery store.

MK: You know, in the old days, when the first generation of the Japanese were running the stores, how did you folks communicate with the Japanese storeowners? Like Tahara, and Aoki, and Ibaraki?

EB: They understood English. They might not have been able to speak it very well, but they understood what you were saying. Because all of

their kids were going to school. Their kids, like my age now, were all supposed to go to Japanese[-language] school. Half of them were running away. They weren't going to school. They were going out to play with us. "Why should [they] play," they would say, "and I got to go to school? I don't care about learning Japanese. I want to play." That was the thing. So, in the years to come, I think Mama-san [Miyo Asuka] is one of the worst English-speaking one of the whole group. But Aoki catered to all of the rich Haoles. So, they, themselves, were right up there. Even Mrs. Aoki and the old man. I don't know how many children they had, either five or six. And I think if you went down to the new Aoki store, that mini Aoki [i.e., Aoki Mini Mart], everyone in there are all the children. They just all took over the store from the mother and dad.

MK: How about the other stores like the launderers? Who were their customers?

EB: Neighborhood and, again, it was all in this area here. Out in the Diamond Head, the Kahala area. Because right here, like Mama-san [Miyo Asuka], she was one of the many Japanese ladies that took in laundry. You never saw a more beautiful ironer than her because she used to do my laundry. Of course, that's when I was working and had the kids, you know. But beautiful, just beautiful. And all the camps in there. They all had their own customers.

MK: What would their service include?

EB: Wash, starch and iron. No, they deliver, [too]. And come and pick up. They never went anywhere. There was one family that used to go and pick it up [from their customers] because the old man had a bicycle with the little basket in the front. But one day he fell down and he hurt himself, and then his son made him stop doing it. So then, they made everybody come. But they did such beautiful work. Mrs. Kosaki was also my laundry lady, and it was just going from here and handing it to her over the fence. And then, Mama-san [Miyo Asuka], it was handing it to her over the fence, also. Or just going right around, and there she is. I used to take it every week, and then go pick it up, and then bring it home.

MK: You know, for the eating places like Tahara's Unique Cafe and the Blue Ocean Inn, too, was around there, what were their specialities?

EB: Tahara's place was Hawaiian food, that's Unique [Cafe]. And pipi kaula, stew and rice, stew and macaroni. They'd put macaroni--I think they did that for the tourists, you know, that was on the beach. A lot of them didn't care for rice. So, he would serve stew over a big blob of macaroni. Until today, every now and then, I do it myself because I still like it. Sometimes you get tired of eating rice, so I would do that right here at home. And he [AB] would tell me, "What are you doing?"

I said, "This is the way Tahara used to serve his."

They'd serve the stew in a bowl, rather than a dish. They put a scoop of rice in the bottom or they put the macaroni in the bottom, and then your stew is over. It's just ready to overflow. You got to eat it very carefully before she begins to fall out of the bowl. But he made all of his own pastries, which was banana pie, pumpkin pie, custard pie--ice cream, the whole bit. You could go in there and buy pipi kaula, laulau, poi, lomi salmon, stew and rice or stew and poi or stew and macaroni, or whatever. But it was catering to the local people. People would come from town, from the office, and come out here, and stand in line and wait for a table to sit down and eat. That's how popular he was.

So, one day, I said to him, "Tahara, why don't you [expand]--" Because his daughter started to rent the shop right next to him as sort of a drugstore. She had that. I can't remember her name. I think it was Lillian. I asked him, "Why don't you enlarge and go into Lillian's place? She doesn't need all of that."

He said, "No. I stay right here. If they want to come and eat my food, they wait." And by golly, we all waited. We'd go down, my kids would go down, and if it's after they've closed the store, they'll pound on the door, and he'll come and open the door and say, "What do you want?"

And so, they'll tell him. He say, "Okay." As long as it's not something he's already put completely away. Like the pie, you know, would be still on the stove or whatever. Cut them a piece. Because my kids were A-ones for pie à la mode. That was that banana pie. He was so well known for that pie. People would come from all over. They'd call and say, "Okay. I'll come and pick up. You make me an extra pie and I'll take it home." So.

But he said, "You better bring back my pan, now."

But everybody knew one another so well. It isn't like you're serving strangers. We never had as many tourists as you do now. So, it was enough to keep him right up there where they went out and bought properties, bought a place up in, I think, it was either St. Louis Heights or up in that area, and right by the park, and all of that. So, that was the eating place.

And then, Blue Ocean. But Blue Ocean was a regular restaurant. So, you have an upper--you know, it was like a split level? Up here were tables and everything, and down here were tables and all that. But they couldn't get a bar license because . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

EB: Blue Ocean didn't have any license because they were so close to the

church [i.e., St. Augustine's Church]. I might be wrong on that, I don't know for sure. But I don't remember them serving liquor. And yet, in the length of time that they were there, they might have been able to get a liquor license later.

MK: Where was that original St. Augustine's Church located?

EB: Where was it? It was always there, right where it is now. The only thing is that they put up a cement church where they had it as a wooden church before. We used to go there--now, here's another thing. They used to show movies in the yard at night. I think it was on Friday nights or Saturday nights, they would show movies. All the neighborhood would go over there and sit on the grass, and watch a show.

But see, the church was getting old, and the latticework was beginning to fall apart and was getting termite-eaten. So then, they decided to build a new church. From the families in the area here that sent their children to St. Augustine's Church, all of those kids were not asked, they were told by the priest or the teacher or whatever, wanting each child to buy a block of hollow tile so that they could feel like they were part of the church by contributing it. That's what the kids used to do. I think it was at that time, twenty-five cents for a block.

MK: Were you a member of St. Augustine's Church?

EB: No, no.

MK: Going back to that block where St. Augustine's is located, I've been told that there was a Pake John Laundry on 'Ōhua [Avenue] near the school. Would you remember something about the laundry . . .

EB: There might have been, but I don't remember. Across the street?

MK: Well, it was across from the Catholic church, nearer to St. Augustine's School--the old St. Augustine's School.

EB: Yeah, there was another school over there. I don't remember a laundry over there, unless it's one of those home laundries. Because just about every Japanese camp that was in the neighborhood, if the camp had, say, eight people, maybe six out of the eight would be taking in laundry. But to have one that you called a laundry in itself, I don't remember anything. Because the Aoki family built their home right in the back of Aoki Store. They had a big home back there, a big two-story house. It really shows you that business was doing very well. And then, there were rentals in the back of it. There were apartments, apartment buildings. That's why I can't visualize the laundry back there, except as a home laundry. That would be about it.

MK: And then, in back of the Aoki's, what was there?

EB: Their house. And then, after their house were rental apartments. We're going up now to Kūhiō [Avenue]. And then, there was a Japanese sort of a court that was there, too. That's where the Tomomitsus, the one that owned that laundry place on Kalākaua [Avenue], they lived back there. They used to come up to work every day. The houses were all set up. There was another family just before you hit Kūhiō [Avenue] that was called the Harris family. I think it's Gay Harris that had their place there. After their place were again rental units, and these were all cottages. My God, it's all coming back to my mind now. All of these cottages under tall coconut trees. It was just a beautiful place. See, Hamohamo Road used to end right at Paoakalani [Avenue], and it was picked up again on 'Ōhua [Avenue] side. So there's that big block that was blocked off. We used to use that as a playground, more or less, because we'd play baseball over there. We were not allowed--at least, she [principal] tried to stop us--from going into the school to play after school because Waikīkī [Elementary] School was known for flowers.

I feel whatever names that I know of flowers is because our principal was a flower bug. Every year we would enter the school grounds in the contest that the DOE [Department of Education] would have, and we always won first prize. Because she'd have petunias, and pansies, and Williams, and what's the big yellow one? We used to call it 'ōkole-'oi'oi, but it's something like the mums, in that mums family. We had asparagus flowers, you know. All of that stuff. A lot of times when the flowers were ready, we as students used to go--she would make us make bouquets--and we'd walk around the neighborhood to go and sell flowers. See, because we also had those Japanese ladies that used to come with the basket. The basket would be full of flowers--gingers, oh, I don't know what else they had, but they were all full with flowers. They'd come walking down the lane and calling, "Flowers! Flowers." If you want flowers, you just go out. Twenty-five cents, you get a nice big bouquet and bring it in the house.

MK: You just mentioned flower vendors, what other types of peddlers or vendors came into the neighborhood?

EB: The manapuas [mea'ono-pua'as]. You know, they call it dim sum. They came. There was an old Chinese man that used to sell na'au. So, they would cook. Oh, and that was the most delicious (chuckles) thing. He would come, calling, "Na'au, na'au-pua [na'au-pua'a]!" You know, just like they say, "Manapua [Mea'ono-pua'a]," he would say, "Na'au-pua [Na'au-pua'a]." I would call my mother, and my mother say, "Well, go inside and get a bowl." So you take your bowl, and he has one of those thick scoopers. He'd put that in the bowl, and you'd pay twenty-five cents or whatever. Bring it in, and there's your dinner. He cooked it with long rice, and carrots, and green onions. And a little shōyu to color the long rice a little. So we had that na'au-pua [na'au-pua'a], we had the manapua [mea'ono-pua'a], and then we had the flower ladies that used to come and sell flowers.

MK: How about candy?

EB: Well, we had a candy truck that used to come, but that was a long time after. I was much, much older when that candy wagon, a Japanese man used to come. We'd all run over and buy candy, because he would also sell Goody-goody. You know, that kind of ice cream? I don't know how he kept it nice, but whatever, he had Goody-goodys, too.

MK: How about saimin?

EB: No. I remember the saimin in another area, right by Coyne Street. I had friends that were up there, and we used to go up there in the evening. There was this truck that used to come by and sell wun tun mein, and sell saimin, and everything. But I think the Board of Health put a stop to that because he was carrying his own bowls. He was just washing it, and we were using the same bowls over and over. We never thought of disease at that time. But after a while, they couldn't do that anymore--I guess, because it stopped. But we used to have those little wagons selling saimin. But again, it was all up in that area--the McCully area, and the Mō'ili'ili area, and by the old stadium, and Beretania Street, they used to have it all over there. But we never had it down here.

MK: So for your neighborhood, you had Ibaraki Store, Aoki Store; you had the manapua [mea'ono-pua'a] man; you had the flower ladies; you had the launderers. You mentioned that the women of the Japanese families did the laundry work . . .

EB: In most cases, yeah. Because everybody was trying to help each other out, you know. Every one of the women, their husbands, in most cases, were working at the hotels. They were either cooks, or they were bartenders. Kosaki was a bartender. The others that were living in here where Mama-san [Miyo Asuka] was, they were all, in most cases, there. But they were able to earn. Mama-san would be at home, and every time you look at Mama-san she's ironing, or she's outside hanging clothes, and you know it's not theirs. I mean, they're not ashamed that they're doing it. We all give them credit for doing it. But that was their way of making extra money. Because Papa-san wasn't earning very much money. You know, their husbands. They had these children that was coming about. There they were. They were out there helping, too. I think they did very well.

MK: You know, from what you told me, it seems like a lot of the Hawaiians or part-Hawaiian families actually owned their lots.

EB: Yes.

MK: Can you tell me how that came about? Especially in your block?

EB: Well, if I remember correctly, my mother said that this whole area was owned by the Castle people and that they were the ones that cut it up. Now, why they had started off and sold it to the Hawaiian

people, I don't know. How the Hawaiian people heard about it, I don't know because it goes all the way back to 1917, 1918, or whatever. Because I am almost positive my mother and dad bought this place in 1918. Because I wasn't born here, and I was born in August of '17. And if this is bought in '18, I must have been six months old, or whatever, when they came here. But how they found it, you see, these are the questions that you never asked. You just accept it, this is where we are, this is my mother and dad's house, and this is it. I can't go any further. There's no one old enough, I think, that could go back that far and actually be old enough to remember. If they are from that time, you're not sure whether you can believe them or not because they'll say something which might not be true. That's the whole thing. So, we've been here all this time. A lot of the people, like the Padeken family, they decided to sell. They wanted to go up to Kaimukī to live, so they sold and went up there. So, we are the few that are left. Just myself and the Ewalikos.

MK: In describing where the people lived, it seems as if a lot of the Hawaiians lived in one area, and the Japanese lived in other areas . . .

EB: No. See, because the Japanese was right in the middle. We were Hawaiian, and the Japanese, and the Ewalikos. I think Mama-san [Miyo Asuka] bought this place over here [i.e., neighboring Tot] in 1938. Nineteen thirty-eight, 1937. See, I got married in 1936. So, I wasn't sure. Then, all of a sudden, there she was. But that's how long. And I don't know--I think she told me one time how much she paid for it, but, oh gosh, when you think of how much it's worth today.

MK: You once told me that in terms of knowing the Japanese [family] names of these Japanese families, you didn't know too much. So, I was wondering how much mixing or contact was there between the Hawaiian families and the Japanese families . . .

EB: All we had for playmates are the Japanese kids because we all went to school. That's how we knew them by only their Japanese name. We were all in the same class. We had no Haoles over here in school. We had Japanese, we had Chinese, Portuguese, and Hawaiians. That was the basic nationalities. So, everybody knew one another, and we never. . . . I don't know, nowadays, there are a lot of criticisms. Maybe I'm wrong in saying this, but they'll say, "Well, all the Japanese are the ones that have all the good jobs. And here we are, we don't have."

I say, "Ey, wait a minute. When we went to school, we all had the same opportunity." I said, "The Japanese kids studied harder than we did. We just went to school to have fun." I said, "They went right on, went to college, went to university, but we decide, 'Ah, I'm not going to school anymore. That's too much like work.' Now, we're envying them because of their advancement in their livelihood." I said, "But they deserve every bit of it. To me, it's just jealousy

if that's what you think it is. Because you had the same chance."

They say, "Well, if you don't know a Japanese guy, you'll never get a job in the government because they are the ones that all hold the high positions."

I said, "Maybe they do. But if you were worth it, you'd have a good chance." So, this is the kind of thing. But as far as going to school in our kid days, there was no feeling of "I'm better than you are because I'm Hawaiian" or "Who do you think you are? You Japanese." So, what's wrong?

I tell you a good incident. When the war [World War II] broke out, the day of the war, I had a Japanese boy. His name is Kenji. I don't know what his last name is. He lived in the back street here, Cartwright [Road]. He always used to help me with my oldest boy, because he was a baby, and would be pushing him on the bicycle or in his stroller.

(Telephone rings. Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

EB: The day after the war or couple of days after, he came to my front door and he wanted to come in and talk. Well, at that time, everybody was really upset because of Japan being the one that was striking us. But prior to that, we never thought of them as being enemies. It was just that they were the ones that did it. So he came to the front door and he said, "Can I come in?"

I tell him, "You get out of here. You're Japanese and it's your country that came and bombed us."

He said, "I don't know why you're talking to me like that. That's not my fault."

When he said that, I thought, "Yeah, that's so true." Because the Orientals here--maybe some of them felt that Japan was the top and they're not going to give up because I heard somebody say that. They'll die before they give up. They'll fight to the death of everybody in Japan.

AB: (Chuckles) Papa-san, "Japan no going lose."

EB: Yeah, Papa-san said, "Japan no lose." So, when Japan gave up, he went into his bedroom. He never came out for two days.

AB: That was Mr. Asuka?

EB: No, Yamamoto, who was one of the camp people where Mama-san [Miyo Asuka] was. He had that. And that's another cute incident. Because during the war, he and my mother were good friends.

AB: That one, he was working for the Fagan family down Diamond Head.

EB: Yeah, he was a cook for them out there. Paul Fagan. Well, my mother had asthma, and he had asthma. All the Orientals had to be off the streets when it's dark. So he went and knocked off one of the fences that we had over here. You know, you had the one-by-twelves. He knocked it off enough so you could just swing it. He was so little, he could just squeeze right through and come up our back steps. So he'd come upstairs and he'd talk to my mother. So my mother says, "You'd better go home. Because suppose policeman catch you, you going Sand Island." Because that's where they were keeping all the people.

"No, no, no." So, he was telling us that in his apartment after the war started, he went and cut a hole in his kitchen and made steps that went downstairs to the ground. He was only about this much off the ground.

MK: About three feet off . . .

EB: Yeah. He put his rice down there, and he put canned stuff there. "Papa-san," I said, "Why you do that?"

He said, "Oh, suppose somebody come. They think me too much kaukau. I put downstairs so nobody see kaukau."

So, another time, I was criticizing him because he had bought a bag of rice. I don't know what the rice was at that time, price-wise, but anyway he paid a fabulous price for it. I said to him--like I say, they understand you more than they could speak. I said, "Why did you do that? That's why the price stay up high because people like you go and buy so much."

So he tells me, "Money, no can eat. Rice, can kaukau. So, I no like money, I like rice."

So, he just goes right ahead. He doesn't care what the price is. But then, being neighbors for such a long time, and he was a terrific cook for Paul Fagan and his family, come Sundays or Saturdays, he'd make rolls or whatever. He'd bring us a pan of rolls for breakfast. Or if he's going to have it for dinner, he would do that and bring it over to us.

See, now, I got away from my subject.

MK: Well, anyway, let's get back to the original subject then. Let's see, what were we talking about? We were talking about the period way before the war. You were telling me a little bit about the neighborhood and what the different people did. What I want to know now is that, starting with just your family, your father, your mother, and you . . .

EB: My sister and I.

MK: . . . your sister. What kind of family activities did you have back

there in Waikīkī?

EB: Well, not very much, really. Because I can remember my dad coming home from work and my mother would have dinner ready. We all had to be there. My sister and I had to be home when dad got home. Because when he'd get home, he wants dinner. So, we would have an early dinner. And then, my dad had a radio. You remember I said that we had these things that the other families didn't have, with a horn. Well, before he got the horn, the RCA horn type of thing, he had earphones and he had a crystal set that he would set in our dining room. He had it right in the corner there. He would sit there, and play it, and just sit and listen to the radio. My mother would be quilting because she used to quilt. My sister and I, we'd be out playing until it's dark. And come home, then it's time to study. Then, take a bath and go to bed. See, because my dad went to bed early, too. I mean, now, I think with TVs, everybody stays up much later than they did normally. Unless we did a lot of listening to the radio, but not so much even then as we did after that. Before TV came on. Because you had stories on radio that you could listen to. Where prior to that, my dad used to catch stations from the Mainland, and we'd listen to the music like that and that's it.

MK: What programs did your family enjoy especially on the radio?

EB: I don't know. Because we never paid any attention to the stations. As long as the music was coming in clear. There was only place that orchestra used to play. The name of the ballroom was Rose Room. Dad, what was that orchestra that used to play for the Rose Room in San Francisco?

AB: Phil Harris is the name.

EB: Phil Harris. That's the one we used to listen to. (EB sings:) "In sunny Rose Land, da-da-da-da da-da-ri-ri." As soon as he'd come on, we'd know that we're on the right station, and there we were. We'd listen to the music. But that was it, because my sister was another reading bug. I was the crazy one.

MK: How about on weekends, then?

EB: Weekends, we always went on the other side of the island. We had relatives. The Padeken family across the street were brought up and raised and whatever on the other side of the island. So, just about every weekend, we would either go to Ka'a'awa or we would go down to La'ie. That's where Mrs. Padeken comes from, La'ie. Her husband, Padeken, came from Ka'a'awa. So we'd go down on Saturdays and come home Sunday evenings. This was such that we were more or less thought of as being brought up down there because we went down there Easter vacation. We stayed Christmas, summertime, the whole bit. My dad and mother--you know, we'd go. But then, as my sister and I got older, we didn't want to go down as often. See, so we said, "Oh, you folks go. We'll stay home."

"You sure you'll be all right?"

"Yes, we'll be all right. Don't worry about us."

But while we were small, we'd always be down there with them and go fishing, and make limu, and catch crabs. We'd play down there and do all kinds of crazy things like go and dig for peanuts, and go up and get mountain apples, and pick guavas. You know, there's so much you can do, especially when you have a bunch of kids that get together. We'd walk. I don't know whether you're familiar with the other side. We'd walk from Ka'a'awa all the way down to Punalu'u. Just walk on the street, pick up a guava, or whatever. Nobody cared that you had to get home for lunch. Lunch is what you could pick up off the street, either a fruit or whatever that's available.

MK: You know, back here in Waikīkī where you did have the beach, and where you did have that muddy area near Makee Island, what kinds of things could you get here in Waikīkī?

EB: Crabs and that black fish, that 'o'opu that we call it. If it's date season, we'd have all the date trees just loaded with dates. That was probably lunch, too, sometimes because we'd go over there and pick it up. Some of it would fall in the mud, but those days we didn't care about whether the mud was poisonous or not. We'd just wash it off in the clearer part of the water, bite off the portion that it falls off from, and then squeeze the other part. The seed and the meat to the date would just pop right into your mouth.

MK: Whereabouts would you get these dates?

EB: Right along the Makee Island. They were on the very edge so they were sort of hanging over this water area. We'd go over there and pick it up and put it in your hand. Get a handful of the nice big thick one, take it back on the other side and wash it in the water that comes in and out from the ocean. There was sort of like a bridge over there. The water would come through, and that part of the water was always nice and clean. But then, as it got in closer, then it would get more stagnant because there was all mud in there. That's where they got their 'alamihis, you know, that black crab. My mother would bring it home, and we'd clean it, and we'd eat it. Take the cover off the crab and clean the whole inside. My mother used to break off all the legs and have it all nice like that.

MK: How about the 'o'opu? Where'd that come from?

EB: That came from the same stream, but the thing was so hard to catch because it was so slippery. My mother and them used to catch it with their hands, you know. So, that means you really gotta [be] fast. Bring that home and clean it, and then cook it in the oven. Because to fry it was too bony. So, she'd wrap it in ti leaves and put it in the oven.

You know, the old days, I mean if we go back that far, we had a kerosene stove. I used to have to go down to Ibaraki Store and buy a gallon of the kerosene. But if the gallon cost twenty-five cents, I would buy twenty cents of kerosene; and five cents, I would buy candy. Those days, also, you buy your rice by the pound. See, they came in a big bag for the stores, and then he has a scooper. My mother would give me twenty-five cents to go and buy twenty-five cents of rice. I buy twenty cents. The other five cents, I buy candy or whatever it is I want at the time. So, I'd bring it. She'd never question it because she never bothered.

(Doorbell rings. Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

EB: So, that was the whole thing.

MK: You once told me about picking limu. Where was that done and how?

EB: Well, as you know, limu grows on the stones, huh? Well, my mother used to go down just about every other day or so and would pick it up, and then bring it home. But clean it down at the beach, get it all clean, so by the time she gets home, it's time to just serve it. She had an area that she went to all the time. She just picked up whatever she could, and just had that limu, and got it all clean. Put in a bag, got it all clean, and then would come home. But it wasn't that she had to go someplace else. So, that was what she used to do.

And then, there used to be crabs on the stones down by the Stonewall. Because now, the sand comes all the way up. Prior to the sand being there, there were just these big boulders. The boulders used to be the place that at night, we used to go down and pick up what we called pipipis. We go pick it up because we look for the nice big ones, and then come home, boil it with a little salt. Use a pin, and then scoop it out, and eat it, see. We'd have a bowl of poi on the side, and here's these things.

(Laughter)

EB: So with all of that, like my dad would always say, "If you're not lazy, you don't starve." My husband says the same thing because he's from the islands where they always went to the beach. Pick 'opihis, get squid, get lobsters, get crabs, and everything. The only things they would have to buy would probably be rice or poi. Some of them had their own taro patch where they grew their own taro. We didn't have all of that here. But it would be . . .

(Talking in background. Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

EB: So, we had all of that. My dad never cared very much. See, my dad was half-Haole. So, he never really cared for all of the seafood things that my mother and I, and my sister used to eat. But he would love to catch it. See, so that we would have, on weekends if we're not going down to the other side of the island, my dad with my

uncle and them, the Padekens, they would go and surround [net]. My mother would drive them all the way out to Diamond Head. She didn't have any license. She would drive out to Diamond Head, say about 4:00 in the morning. They would get off the car, take the nets. Do you know what it is to go pa'ipa'i?

MK: Yeah.

EB: Okay. Well, they would go pa'ipa'i and by the time they get out of the ocean, they're over here by Kapahulu. And then, get out of the water and then bring the fish home. We'd have dried fish, raw fish, fried fish, whatever. It was so plentiful that if they come halfway and they feel, "This is enough," they'd come in the water. And here my mother is, waiting over here, thinking they're coming out of the water, and here they're coming right on the sand. She said, "What are you doing?" So, that was the whole set that they did over there.

MK: You know, we've talked about what your family did, right, sometimes during weekends. We talked about some of the beach activities they had, right? Picking limu and things. I was wondering, what kind of neighborhood activities occurred here?

EB: Very little. Very little, if any at all. The Japanese people more or less stayed by themselves. We stayed by ourselves. We used to go down to the beach on the other side of the island. We'd come home, and it's time to just get your clothes ready, the house done, everything, because next day is school. You just sort of go through the five days of school because you're getting ready to go down again Saturday. That's the reason why I say that. It's not that we didn't know one another. We all knew one another. But we just did our own thing. Everybody did their own thing.

MK: How about the parents? The mothers and fathers. What did they do if they did get together in this neighborhood area?

EB: Have a beer maybe. Because everybody--my dad was making home-brew beer. My sister and I, my mother, we'd all have to help him because it was one of those big crock things that he'd put his. . . . I don't know. I never ever did find out what it is, except that my sister and my job was--see, he would do this in our dining room. My mother would put a half a teaspoon of sugar in the bottle. We had shelves built in the back of our door in the bathroom. My sister and I---my dad would cap it--and she and I would pick up the bottle and we'd go back and forth. In doing that, we're shaking it all the way until we get to the bathroom, and then we set it up on the shelves. And then, my dad, I don't know what goes wrong if that's considered wrong, but sometimes at night the stupid bottle would pop. Then, the next day we got beer all over the floor, and we got to clean that up. In addition to that, we got to wash the bottles. You know, those days, the tubs were huge. They were long tubs. We'd clean all the bottles in there, and then get it ready for the next time that my dad is going to do it. That was their only other

means of entertaining themselves. They made their own home-brew. Because you couldn't buy any liquor those days. What do they call that?

MK: Prohibition?

EB: Yes. That was in effect at that time. So that's what they did. It wasn't a whole neighborhood type of get-together. It was just maybe my uncle from across the street would come over. If he had any brother that was visiting him or whatever, they would come over. Or we would go over to their house. If you're there and it's getting close to dinner time, so he said, "Well, why don't you stay and have dinner?" So, we'd run home and get our dinner and take it back over there, and have dinner with them. That's about the extent of the whole thing.

MK: How about mothers or the women of the neighborhood?

EB: See, at that time, the little I remember of it, the mothers or the Hawaiian mothers were quilting. They were making blankets. My mother made a blanket for each one of us. My sister, myself, my three kids, and my sister's three. So, we were busy with that in the evenings, too, because you got to overcast the pattern first before you quilt. So then you need a large living room which we had in our old house, and then we put the quilt on a horse. You know, you have two boards, and you roll it until you get to the center of it. Then you work on one side and you quilt until you get to the very end. Then you roll this up, and then you start working on the other end. So they would have about four women. I can't think of any more than four. And these four women would each be doing their overcasting. But then, every day they would come to my house. I serve you lunch; you all work on my blanket. When my blanket is done, we'd go to your house. You serve us lunch and we work on your blanket. That's the way they were doing the blankets.

When it was our side and our time to have it done, my mother would have the ladies come over. But then, she would get my sister and I to get in because she said, "That's the only way you folks going to learn. Get in and do it." So we used to get in and do it with her. But it was a job! And you get your fingers puka with blood running. Before you know it, you staining the underpiece of the (blanket). Because, you see, you have one hand underneath, and you're over this board that's hitting you right here. You got one hand under there, and then this one, you go up and down. But until it hits this finger, you don't pull it up again because that means it hasn't gone through. So every time you hit this finger, you make one hole, second hole. Before you know it, this becomes so callused. You can't put a thimble on it because then you can't feel your needle coming through. But now they're doing (it) on a hoop. But by doing it that way, you can't put as much cotton inside because then it's too big. So I think that's what the ladies used to do. And lau hala. But my mother never did any of that, so that's why I never think of it. The people on the other side of the island would

do more of it because they had lau hala trees on the beach.

MK: What did, say, the teenagers do around here as you remember it?

EB: We had a group here that was quite athletic. We played volleyball and basketball quite a bit. That was right in the schoolyard. See, we had a court over there. We had a basketball court and a volleyball court. Every day after school we'd be in there. My mother would have to come and haul me out because I'd be over there playing. I'd rather play than stay home and study. So, there I was.

MK: You mentioned over the telephone that there was a place near the stream that ran in the back of the Japanese stores where the young men . . .

EB: Yeah, they used to go and gamble. But that wasn't young kids, that was all the older fellows. You know, they were in their middle twenties. They would go over there. They'd go along the beach side and then go in from there because they could tell it's low tide. But at one time it was opened all the way through. It used to come out on the other side, on the back of the stores. See, so that's why every time there was a big rain or a big storm, Ibaraki Store would always get flooded because he was down close and the water would come in. He was like this on the slope, and the water would be up here. This is Kalākaua [Avenue], and they were there. This was the level part of it. He would be the one that would get his merchandise wet down there.

MK: Not the other stores?

EB: The laundry was right next, but they had it all built up [higher above ground] because they anticipate this thing happening. So that would be the whole thing.

MK: How often would that kind of flooding occur, though?

EB: Ah, maybe once in five years, whatever. You know, you never think very much of it.

MK: And then, what kind of activities were there among the children, you know, as you remember when you were a little kid? Running around the neighborhood, or playing in the yard, or . . .

EB: Very little. There weren't as many toys that you could go to Kress's and buy because there were no stores that you could do that. I don't even remember having a doll. I never missed it, though, because nobody else had one. So you couldn't say, "Oh, I want one." Like the kids today, "Why can't I have a bike? So-and-so has one. Why can't I have this kind of shoe because so-and-so has one."

I go, "I don't care what they have. It's what you can afford to have."

But we never had any competition in clothes, or shoes, or whatever. Because if somebody had a ball, we'd be more interested in playing ball and you didn't care what you wore, just as long as it didn't fall apart. But other than that, I don't know. Maybe somebody else could tell you something different about that part, but it wasn't, even though I considered myself quite athletic. I played ball, and I went all through high school doing that. And even when I was working, I played for the financial league. But that would be just about it.

MK: You know, for today, I think I'm going to end here. And then, for the next time I come, I want to come and ask you about going to Waikīkī Elementary School, going to Washington [Intermediate School], McKinley [High School], and then your life here as an adult. Okay?

EB: Oh, yeah. All right.

MK: We'll carry it all the way through up till . . .

EB: Till my old age.

MK: Up till the present. This is not your old age.

(Laughter)

MK: Up to the present, okay? We'll end here. And I really learned a lot today. I really enjoyed it.

EB: Oh, that's nice. It's brought back a lot of memories.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 13-13-2-85

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Esther (Jackson) Bader (EB)

March 11, 1985

Waikīkī, O'ahu

BY: Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mrs. Esther Jackson Bader at her home in Waikīkī, Honolulu, Hawai'i on March 11, 1985. The interviewer is Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay. The first question for today is going to deal with your elementary school days. And we can begin by having you tell me where Waikīkī Elementary School was located.

EB: Okay. Waikīkī Elementary School was on Hamohamo Road, but the whole school went from Hamohamo Road to Kāneloa Road which is on the ma uka side. We are on the ma kai of the school. Our principal at that time was a Mrs. King. She was very interested in flowers. We had one of the nicest gardens, I think, because we entered every year in the garden contest for all the (public) schools. Just about every year, we would win. We would win the prize for the school with the best flowers. She wouldn't let us go into the schoolyard after school to play because she was afraid that we would be playing and running right into the plants. So she was very careful about that. In addition to the flowers that she had in there, I don't know where it was done, but anyway she had pieces of wood [carvings] that [were] (stuck) into the ground that had a bird--a parrot, or a mynah bird. She had that strung out throughout the gardens. I feel that a lot of the names of flowers I learned because of her. Other than that, we wouldn't care whether it was a Williams, or petunias, or all of that. But because of her, she made us study all the flowers. Because as soon as it was almost time to pick the flowers, we used to pick it and (we would) take it around to the neighborhood to sell.

So, when my sister first went there to school, the school went up to the eighth grade. But my sister was about six years older than I was. So, by the time I went, or let's say, by the time I left Waikīkī [Elementary] School, it had stopped at the sixth grade.

MK: Who took care of all those flowers and plantings?

EB: The janitor and the classroom kids. So, you'd go out for a little

while, and they'd send so many (of us). But it was the janitor that would do it, and he did a nice job.

MK: Who was that janitor?

EB: The only one I could remember was a woman, and her name, I think, it was a Mrs. Kaleikini. She lived up in Kapahulu. Her first name was Esther, too. But prior to her, I'm not sure whether it was a Mr. De Rego or someone, you know. But by the time I got out of Waikīkī [Elementary] School, I think that other woman was there.

MK: You mentioned that sometimes you used to cut the flowers and sell it in the neighborhood.

EB: Yeah.

MK: For what purpose?

EB: Well, I guess we take the money back to the principal, and she would use that to buy seeds for the flowers for the next time around. Or maybe to have a fund where she could go and get money to go and buy the wood to make all of these things, carvings, of the birds, and chickens, and roosters. We had all of that stuck right in the ground in the flowers. Because there was all kinds of flowers.

MK: What did the buildings at Waikīkī Elementary School look like?

EB: A regular school, I would say. Because they were right across the street of where my family lived. We had our house right across. By the time I got to the sixth grade, I was right across of my house. Right next to the school, the first house after the school on the opposite side was my aunt. Her name was a Mrs. Padeken. So, if my mother saw her out in the yard or wanted her, she would yell from our porch over to my aunt's yard. In the meantime, all the kids would start laughing because they knew it was my mother. I was in there ever since first grade, see, so then the teacher--my sixth grade teacher, I think, I remember her to be a Mrs. O'Brien--and she would tell me to go home and tell my mother not to make too much noise. My mother didn't like the idea. She said, "I live in this house. This is my property." "If I want to yell across to her," she says, "that's my business."

So I said, "Well, I'm just telling you what the teacher said." So, that was the whole thing.

The whole school was built around, I would say, the flowers.

MK: Now, you've told me about the principal and about Mrs. O'Brien, your sixth-grade teacher, but who were your other teachers? What do you remember about them?

EB: Well, for the first few teachers, the first three grades, I don't remember very well. The only one that I remember was my fourth-

grade teacher, a Mrs. [Eddie] Lam. She was my fourth-grade teacher. Then my fifth-grade teacher was a Mrs. McCluskey. Isn't that something? That name just came back to me. And then, my sixth-grade teacher was a Mrs. O'Brien. And that was just the [last] three years.

We used to have Hawaiian programs and things of that sort for May Day. We danced like the kids are still doing it today. You know, so we would get together and we would sing and we would dance.

As everybody in my age group would know, when we were in grammar school, we all had to have stars for our health. In other words, if you were underweight, you'd have a red star. If you were average, then you'd have a silver star. I was always overweight, so I always had a gold star. I use to hate myself because I was heavy. Yet, I couldn't seem to lose weight. So, everybody else, all the Japanese kids were so small, they would all have to stand in line to take their. . . . What's that oil?

MK: Castor oil?

EB: No, cod-liver oil. They would stand in line to get that, and I'd laugh because I was so healthy I didn't have to take any of that thing, see. But now that I look back to it, they really took good care of us, you know, the school did. They would check our teeth. At that time, they would check your hair, too, for what they called 'ukus--you know, lice? Is that the right word, lice? If any of us had it, we'd have to go home with a note to your parents so that they could get your hair cleared up. Because by that time, the teachers didn't want to get close to you, either, because they were afraid they were going to get it. But there was so much of it in school that you didn't even know you had it sometimes. But some of us did have it, and then go home and get it cleaned out. They'd put all of that other mess in it to get it all straightened out. But by the time we were out of grammar school--before we were even out of grammar school--providing it was caught early, my mother would do it. And then, too, I had long, long hair. The reason for that was because I used to dance the hula, see. So, in order to pull one of those things [i.e., lice] off of you, you've got to go from here [the root] and go all the way down to the end because my hair was down to here.

MK: Down to your hips?

EB: Down to my hips, below my hips. But it was something that my mother took care of because she knew why I had my hair that long. I'm sure the teachers were thinking, "Well, why don't they just cut her hair?" It was so thick, that the regular metal band, you know the binder for the hair, that (was) not big enough to hold my hair. It would just pop right open.

But that's about what I could remember having the teachers. . . . My mother knew all of the teachers because they were all local

teachers and they had been at the school for the last twenty, thirty, forty years. So, it wasn't anything that it was somebody strange that you went to see. No, it wasn't. Because they'd all call each other by their first name.

MK: You know, you just mentioned your taking hula lessons. Where did you take your hula?

EB: I learned that from my aunt. She used to come to our house, because I was her only student at the time. That's how I picked it up. I must have started when I was about eight or nine years old. So by the time I graduated I was used by my aunt as a leader. In other words, if she had a class or a group, I would go with her. See, in those days, they didn't have music instruments to play for hulas. It was all with the gourd. And so, my aunt would take me with her, and she would play the gourd and chant, and then I would lead the group. It's been so long, you know, that it's just something. So, I stayed with it and danced until I got married.

MK: What was your aunt's name?

EB: Her name was Kekaha Ross. She used to live--that's the only place I remember her living--in Kaka'ako, right down where Kewalo Basin is. They used to have a lot of squatters down there. The squatters were all Hawaiian families. I didn't realize the connection, things like that. But she would come here to the house and would work with me. And then, my dad would take her home, or she would go home, or her husband would come and pick her up and take her back. She was one of the old, old-timers. Because if you go back, that was in the late '20s that I was doing it with her. A lot of her entertaining, though, were at private parties for Haole people that had a lot of money and was having a group of people over for the evening. She would be the one to do the playing of the instruments, and then I would dance.

MK: Did you or your aunt ever have anything to do with the Mossman Lalani Village?

EB: No, no. Because that was way after. In fact, now that you mention that, my aunt taught Mrs. Mossman the hula and I led her while she was learning. She was a teacher at Waikīkī [Elementary] School. She lived right down here, see, where Kalākaua and Paoakalani [Avenues meet], and she'd come over here for her classes. I would work with my aunt to sort of act like a leader and she would follow. Another woman that my aunt taught that became very popular was a Mrs. Akeo. She was with the Royal Hawaiian [Hotel] hula troupe, and then also became affiliated with Kodak Hawai'i show until she died. So, she was another one.

MK: Would the first name of that Mrs. Akeo be May?

EB: No. It was May's aunt, I think. Louise was her first name.

MK: Louise Akeo.

EB: Louise Akeo. I think May was her niece. I remember that name, because they used to live right here. Paoakalani and 'Ōhua [Avenues], there was an area there that the road had not gone through. Okay, when the road went through, she had a house right there. Louise Akeo did. At the corner was this Japanese family, I think it's the Nakamura family that was there. Next to the Nakamura family was the Akeos. I don't think she got married until very late because I think at the very end she was a Mrs. Silva, I'm not sure. But she worked for Inter-Island Steam Navigation Company, that Louise Akeo, until she retired. But she was also head of the Royal Hawaiian girls and that was the hula troupe that did the dancing at the Royal Hawaiian [Hotel].

MK: Were there any other dancers that came from this neighborhood?

EB: The Padeken girls. And the Akeo girl, that May Akeo, because they lived over there with the aunt. The Mossman girls, the [Lalani] Hawaiian Village. They had two daughters over there. I might be forgetting somebody but I don't know. See, and who lived over there? That Heine. That Kalama girl, the one that's with Robert Cazimero. She lived in that [Lalani] Hawaiian Village area. (Also, I think Puanani Alama did, too.) You remember I told you that they had (houses) renting? She, (the Kalama girl), and her parents were renting in there, too. Now, they would know something about Lalani Hawaiian Village because they lived right on the land.

MK: So, that's Leina'ala Kalama Heine?

EB: Heine, yes. She's the one that dances all the hula for the Cazimero brothers, and she also has her own hula studio.

MK: You know, getting back to the topic of your elementary school days, who are some of the classmates that you remember really well from your elementary school days?

EB: Well, my closest and dearest friend, and still is, is a Portuguese girl and her name was Dorothy Cambra. So, she is now a widow, but she is a Dorothy Francis. She and I went to school from first grade right through high school. We were good friends throughout the time. Another one that was a good friend was a Josephine DeFries. They lived on Cartwright [Road]. See, we're in the zoning area, so we all went to Waikīkī [Elementary] School. The other one was the Lau family. There were two sisters there, Margaret and another one. I can't remember the older sister's name. And the Joy girls. They went to school, too, over here. Everybody were good athletes. You know, volleyball, baseball, whatever. My two cousins, the Padeken girls, Elizabeth and Lily, and then there were two others younger than them, Alice and Emmeline. We all went over here to school. Then from here we went to Washington [Intermediate School].

MK: What were the boundaries of the neighborhoods that went to Waikīkī

Elementary School in those days?

EB: Just about all. Even Kapahulu came down here and went to Waikīkī [Elementary] School, because you didn't have very many. Thomas Jefferson [Elementary School] didn't open until later. By the time I had my children, Thomas Jefferson [Elementary School] was an English-standard school at that time when they opened. I think when they opened they opened as an English-standard, and the kids had to take an oral test before they would be accepted there. So, there was Jefferson [Elementary School] and here was Waikīkī [Elementary] School. So, when Waikīkī [Elementary] School was broken down, they took it and put it up in Kapahulu right at the corner of Monsarrat and Lē'ahi [Avenues]. That's where they are. But all of us went to Waikīkī [Elementary] School, the whole neighborhood, the whole thing. Kapahulu, and at that time, there weren't as many people down in the Moana [Hotel] side because we used to call that area 'Āinahau. Over here was Waikīkī. That was 'Āinahau over there. So if my mother would say, "Where were you?"

I'd say, "I was down at 'Āinahau." So, she'd know just where I was.

Because the next question is, "What are you doing down there?"

But the whole area went to Waikīkī [Elementary] School.

MK: Going back to the topic of 'Āinahau, what were you doing down (chuckles) at 'Āinahau . . .

EB: Well, some of the kids from school would live out there, so we'd go home with them to go and play. Because there was that area between Paoakalani and 'Ōhua [Avenues] that was just a big vacant spot. They had a Japanese[-language] school over there, they had a house where they had a lot of old Chinese men that lived like a boardinghouse in that area over there. We'd go over there and play ball. So, if we go beyond 'Ōhua [Avenue], we would then be in 'Āinahau.

MK: How far did 'Āinahau extend . . .

EB: Go? I would say, down to about Kūhiō Theater, in that area. But it'll be Diamond Head of that area. But those days, didn't have anything there. Very few things, if there's houses or whatever.

MK: So, where did you play in that 'Āinahau area?

EB: Out in the empty lot, anybody's empty lot, or any empty lot we could find. Because we'd either play volleyball, or we'd play baseball, or we'd play master, or you'd play. . . . What's that eggs thing?

MK: Steal eggs?

EB: Steal eggs, yeah. We'd play that. We could do that no matter, you know, anywhere. But the thing is, to get the group together. If they say, "Well, we're going over here," we all follow. We'd go

into that same place, and when it was tamarind season, we'd all go and get tamarind and bring. Mmm, just talking about it. Because like this is, I would say a Saturday and a Sunday. The parents today will prepare lunch for their kids. Our days, you go out and get whatever you can for lunch. If it ends up you're going to eat tamarind, or you're going to eat papaya, or you going to eat mangoes, or mountain apples, somebody. . . . A lot of the houses had mountain apple trees right in their yard. We'd just go over there and get plums, the plums would be in their yard, too. So, we practically lived on a fruit diet, lunch time.

MK: You mentioned the tamarinds. Where did you get the tamarinds from?

EB: From the trees that's growing in those empty lots. Oh, they'd have about three or four trees, and they'd be big ones, you know. They'd come down, the sides will come down. You could just stand on the ground and pick it up. It tastes like cracked seed, all of that stuff, because it had that sweet-sour taste. That would be everybody sharing. Not really sharing, but, you know, "What do you got? Gimme some." This is the way we would do it.

MK: And then, as a child, if you went beyond 'Āinahau . . .

EB: I never did. Because I knew that my mother would disapprove. My mother---like, you know, I'm an only child. So, it was, "Where did you go? Why did you have to go there? Who did you play with?" This is why, I really never got close to anyone right around here, because my mother wouldn't allow that. If I went anywhere, she'd want me home at a certain time. My sister and I, but my sister was that much older than I and she was in another. . . . Say, if I was at grammar school, she was already at McKinley [High School]. She'd never get home until way later than me.

MK: Going back to the topic of your elementary school days, we talked about how May Day was celebrated. But how about other holidays like Christmas or Easter? Any type of special . . .

EB: Very little. The only one I used to remember having something for was that fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. [Eddie] Lam. She would bring candy for Easter and candy for Christmas, but there was no play. At least, if there was, I don't remember. But she'd have it, and we'd all have a little package on our desk. Oh, everybody was so thrilled about it. That made her very popular with the kids. Because as you go onto the next grade, I had Mrs. McCluskey, I think it was, and she never bothered about anything. It was just time to go out on Christmas holiday. That was last day of school, that's it. You just go to school and go home. For me, going home was just crossing the street and I was home. But a lot of the kids came from Kapahulu. My friend, too. You know, the one that I liked. She [Dorothy Cambra] lived right up by the fire station. So, she'd come down. She and I would come home to my house to have lunch, and then when the bell rings, we'd go dashing down the steps because we had about eleven steps to the top of where the verandah

was. And she and I go dashing back to school.

So, it wasn't that my mother was very picky, but I think it was because I was by myself. You know, I didn't have an older brother, and my sister was busy. I mean, there was six years difference between us. So, she had her own thing going, and she was studying and was going to different classes in school. So, it was me. And my mother was a housewife. If she was a working mother, it would have been something else. Then there would be no one home to care to where I went, as long as I got home before they got home from work. So, that was the reason, I think. I mean, my mother was the one that was doing everything, washing, and the whole works.

MK: You know, when you were a little girl, what do you remember about special events? Like, I've heard about Kamehameha Day being celebrated at Kapi'olani Park. What do you remember about any special events occurring in Waikīkī?

EB: I don't remember anything that I thought was that important. The park [i.e., Kapi'olani Park], we used to go out there because they used to have lily ponds right where the bandstand is now, just beyond the bandstand. Well, by that time, I was a little bit older, and we used to go out there every Sunday to listen to the band. But Kamehameha Day parade was always in town. It's only been since we're going into tourism that it's coming out here more and more because we never had Aloha. . . . You know, what's that other?

MK: Aloha Week?

EB: Yeah, Aloha Week. We never had that. That all started way, way late. And the Kam [i.e., Kamehameha Day] parade was a big thing, but it started down at the ['Iolani] Palace and I think it ended right where the Blaisdell [Center] is now. And that was it. Or, after a while, it went further down to Atkinson [Boulevard]. But after we started going in for tourism, then it was brought or they were trying to bring it out here because of the tourists.

MK: You know, you mentioned Kapi'olani Park and going there on weekends to listen to the music. What kinds of music . . .

EB: No, because the Hawaiian Band played out there every Sunday. We'd all go out there because a lot of people would go, and they'd take their lunch and everything and would make it a full day. We were at the age where we just wanted to go out there and see who was there because we could care less about the music. It's to see who was there, and if you knew anybody, if it was anybody that you liked, well, you joined the group and had a nice time. But other than that. . . .

And before that, when the zoo was on an island, then we'd have to go around, go up there, out to Kalākaua [Avenue], in order to go down to the park. Because the zoo took the whole--that whole island was right there. We couldn't go across it like we can right now, going

to the park.

MK: What did that zoo area look like back then?

EB: I thought it was very nice. It was a well-cared park. The elephant had its own area. All the animals were there. On the top part there, they had this whole area wired off where all of the animals were there like the ostrich, and the zebras, and the turtles. Whatever they could get in that big area, they were all there. It's right where the vegetable garden begins. Because they never used to go that far up like they are now. There was a road that came down Kapahulu, and you go right into the park because there was a drive-in in there, in the park right close to the elephant's cage or area or whatever they called it, because it was all cemented. They had that, I think they called it the [Kapi'olani] Drive Inn. After they stopped over there, they went down and opened by Wailana. You know that condo? Right at that corner, that's where that drive-in went. But they started in the zoo. So, all of the kids would go, and all of the lovers, and whoever was running around with whoever. They would all end up in there.

And then, my girlfriend, the one that I said was my close girlfriend, her father was a caretaker at the zoo. They got a lot of things from the zoo. They were able to go down, ride the elephant, all of that stuff, that I thought, "Oh, gosh, I don't want to do that, I'm too scared." But that was the Makee Park.

MK: You know, people have told me that sometimes that area was very muddy.

EB: Because there was a stream. There was a stream that ran from the ocean all the way up to the end of the zoo. And naturally, there was no outlet for it going up, but there is an outlet going that way. So, one portion--for instance, say the size of this apartment was the closest to the beach. We used to go in there for a swim. But once you got beyond that, then the mud started. My mother used to go in there and pick up the crabs that was in the mud and the fish that was in there. But also, the dates used to fall off of the tree and fall right into the mud, and we. . . . Well, those days, you never thought about, oh, that's poison, and this is no good, and that is no good. We just pick it up and bite off the tip, wash it, and pop it right into your mouth and eat it. That was another thing we ate, the dates. And until today, there's still some date trees up here that is still there. But when I look at their dates, and I think, oh, the junk ones. The ones that they had down there were really nice and thick and meaty. But these they have now, well, that's still one of the old ones. Because they had several varieties of dates.

MK: You know, when you were a little girl and, say, you would venture out of this neighborhood, or your parents would take you out of this part of Waikīkī into, say, now where there are hotels and everything, what was there, then?

EB: Very seldom that we'd do that. Our weekends when I was a little girl always ended up going on the other side of the island. We'd meet my dad after he was through work, pick him up, go to the market, do our shopping, come home, put it away, get on the car, and go on the other side of the island. We were there Saturday, and we'd come home Sunday late in the afternoon or early evening. But it's hard to say that because we never did, my sister and I. Wherever we went, all four of us went together. So, it was a very. . . . I don't know what to say.

MK: Close-knit family?

EB: Yeah. Sometimes we would rather, we would stay, but they say, "No, you're going, too," so that was it. Those days, when your parents tell you something, you don't question it. Now, they'll say, "Why? Why do I have to go? Why do you do this? Why do I have to do that?" So, that was the only thing, I would say. But sometimes, you feel like if somebody sort of give you a hint of something, and then it come back. But for you to go back and think about it, you think, "Chee, I don't remember that."

MK: Also, you know, by the time you were in the sixth grade, the Ala Wai Canal was built. Tell me about the area before the canal came up, if you can.

EB: Well, there were ducks up in that area, you know, where the golf course is now. Every time we had a big rain--see, now, that's coming back--we'd get flooded down here. And there goes the gate to our property go floating down the street. We had a big yard on the side where my mother had a taro patch, and we had chickens. She used to do her washing over there. Those old days, you wash on the stone that's right by the faucet of water. Well, the chickens would all drown because of the water, so my dad would go get all of the chickens and put it in the bathroom of our house! Can you imagine? They'd all perch on the tub, see, because we had one of those old-fashioned [tubs]. The tub was even longer than this couch. And there were all the chickens until the water went down, and then we'd let them out. But in the meantime, can you imagine what a mess that was? But that was the thing. There was no drainage. So when the canal came up, it stopped all of that. Because all of the water ended up in there, the one that comes down by 'Iolani School, and the other one. There's two, I think, that comes in there, then it goes out. So, we were thinking that it was coming this way.

MK: Down Kapahulu, all the way through?

EB: Yeah. But they closed up this stream instead. Because the stream is still underneath of this roadway. And they have manholes. The manhole right at the corner of Kapahulu and Kalākaua [Avenues], if we have a storm and it's a rough, rough ocean, that manhole cover keeps popping up all the time and the water comes shooting right through there. It still does. But, you know, it was something that had to be closed or they wanted it closed. I don't know why,

because to me, it added to the scenery of the area. But they didn't think so. Because we had a lot of bulrushes right out here that we as kids would go play in it. And come out with mud all over. My mother would throw me out of the house, and [say], "Get by the faucet and get your feet clean before you come in." But that's the way it was at that time. So, the canal didn't come through, but it served its purpose as far as flooding. We never had it anymore.

MK: How severe would the damage be in the neighborhood when it did flood? Besides the gate coming off and the livestock?

EB: That's about the only thing. We're having more damage now than I can remember as a kid. Because everybody's house, in most cases, were off the ground and the water ran right through underneath. So, your whole yard was all flooded, but as soon as the water. . . . And then, we're right here close to the ocean. She'd seep right through fast. The water doesn't stay very long. And all the roads were not blacktopped. They were just dirt. So, there you are. You'd have a puddle here and all over the place, but then in a day or so it's all gone.

MK: What do you remember about the agriculture, the farms, that used to be . . .

EB: We didn't have any farms here.

MK: . . . down by the Ala Wai golf course and canal area.

EB: They didn't have very many because when I used to go to [intermediate and high] school after I left Waikīkī [Elementary School], we went on a streetcar. The streetcar went up McCully. Now, all the way up McCully was just flooding area. Nobody wanted to buy a house over there because every time it rained it would flood. And the streetcar was built on a higher---the rails were up high. So, while you on it, you're just jiggling all over the place going all the way down to King Street. It did have a lot of farms, but everybody that had their place, if at all, had a small little area for themselves. Those days, they didn't care whether you raised chickens, and ducks, and pigs, and whatever in your backyard like they do now. So, if anybody did, it was just for their own use, not to go out and sell to anybody else. But they had a duck farm, and some of those were the big duck farms, they would take their ducks down to the market on weekends. Or the chickens would go. But they'd do all of their own right at home. Whereas, now, they have all of these big things going, wow. But that sounds like it.

MK: I know that after you went up to the sixth grade at Waikīkī Elementary School, you went to intermediate school. What intermediate school?

EB: Washington Intermediate School.

MK: You know, the gang that went there from here, who was in it? Your Waikīkī gang members?

EB: Well, there were some of us that went to Kam [i.e., Kamehameha] School, some didn't go to school. Chee, now that I'm thinking about that, I'm trying to figure it out. But the bulk of us went to Washington [Intermediate School].

MK: How did you folks get there?

EB: By streetcar. We'd walk down here. See, now, if you lived in Kapahulu, you'd have to walk all the way down to Kalākaua [Avenue] to get your [streetcar]. I would walk from here down to Kalākaua [Avenue] and get the streetcar, and then go down. After we got older, this is the funny part. You're young, you're going to seventh grade. You got shoes on your feet that's killing you, and you're wondering how I'm going to last all day, because grammar school, we never used to wear shoes. So, here's your first experience with shoes. It's either too tight, or your parents have bought you shoes that they're planning to have you wear for the next three years. Even if your feet grows, it's going to wear that shoe.

So, we'd go down, and like I started to say, you never think much of anything until I was in high school, then I became conscious of the. . . . You know, we had a conductor on the streetcar. You had the driver and you have the conductor. Every time he'd pick up a token, he'd ring it so that it would register on the meter over there. Well, later on, we kept thinking, that guy is smart. He's picking up three tokens and he's only ringing two times. Or he'll pick up five and ring four times. That means that that fifth one is going in his pocket. So, we'd sit there on purpose and watch him. But nobody thought of reporting him. It's just that it was something that we knew that he was doing. And yet, everybody would say, "Oh, that crook. Look what he's doing." We'd count as he picks it up. We know he picked up three, or we know he picked up four. But whatever it was, he would never ring it, chring, chring--you know, one time for each one. He'd wait until he'd collect it and go one, two, three or one, two, three, four. And we'd say, "You see, he only rang it three times. I know he picked up four tokens." But you never think of it until you're older, and then you become conscious of all these things that was going on. And that's it.

The streetcar used to go all the way out to Diamond Head. You could drive it from both ends, see. So the guy would pick up his wheel and go to the other part of the streetcar, put it down, and then start back this way. My dad went to work on the streetcar, also, and our car was left in the garage.

MK: How much did it cost to ride a streetcar down to Washington Intermediate?

EB: I don't know, I think it was five cents. I'm not even sure of that. Either that, or for twenty-five cents, maybe, we got six tokens or seven tokens. Something like that. Maybe for ten cents we got three. But I'm not even sure. Isn't that something? I don't remember that.

MK: How long did it take from here to Washington [Intermediate School]?

EB: Oh, about fifteen minutes. Because we'd go straight on Kalākaua [Avenue], turn up McCully [Street], hit King Street, and we'd just go over for a couple of blocks, and there was Washington [Intermediate School]. I would say between fifteen, no more than twenty [minutes], though.

MK: And then, when you were going to Washington Intermediate, what were some of the early teen-age activities you and your friends from Waikīkī took part in?

EB: There again, I was back in with a group that was dancing the hula for programs over there. The thing I think back now and I'm quite proud of was, every year, the intermediate schools would put on an operetta. I can't remember the name, but I think it was In Old Virginia. When it was time to audition, let's say, we all--they didn't call it audition that time, it was tryouts. So, everybody went. So I ended up with the lead to that operetta. This other guy, we had a Portuguese guy. I can't remember his last name. He was the lead, too. This was my ninth-grade year. We had three shows, I think. One was for the student body during the day, and then two--one in the afternoon, and then one at night. So then, all the parents could come, and all the teachers would come and bring their families and whatever. So, I was very proud of that. I'm sorry that there was no such thing as taking movies or anything of that sort like they do now. Because that was way back in 1932.

I don't say it's sad, but it [i.e., operetta] made it hard because I had my long, long hair. My costume for it was the Southern belle type of dress. You know, with the wig on and your curls that hang down on the side. Well, I couldn't get all of my hair in there. So, I came home and I told my mother, I said, "You know, I'm going to have to cut my hair."

So, she said, "Cut your hair? You're crazy."

And I said, "Well, if I don't cut it, I can't get that wig on my hair."

So I can't really remember, but I'm almost sure that when that time came, my mother was so upset with me because I kept bugging her about cutting my hair, she cut it herself with a scissors. Now, you got to go to the hairdresser. Not those days. She cut it right off and cut it right up to my neck. And then, I was able to put it up, and then put the wig on. So, that was the beginning of my short hair.

MK: You really remember that time, then.

EB: (Laughs) Oh, yes, I remember that. And I would bring the book home, you know, to study. Wash the dishes, singing and singing. Prior to that, my mother would say, "Why are you singing those songs

so often?"

So, I told her, "Because I'm in that play."

She said, "What is it?"

So I told her what it was. I don't know, the parents, that time, we didn't have any [going to meetings at school] . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: Okay, you can continue about the PTA [Parent-Teachers Association]. No PTAs . . .

EB: Oh, my mother and my dad never went to any PTA. I don't even remember whether they had any at that time. So, it wasn't the kind where you had to come home, and my mother. . . . I mean, she didn't go to school very long, so. My dad, I don't think went to school. Now, this is the kind of thing. There are certain times when they don't talk. And then, certain times when you talk, and talk, and you don't know whether you're saying the right thing or not. But it wasn't the kind where my mother would go to school with me or talk to the teacher about me or having to go to school to talk to the teacher about me if I'd done something wrong. Nothing like that happened. I don't ever remember that even through junior high school. But now, that's an important thing, you know, being part of the PTA. But they didn't have it that time, and if they did, I don't even remember. If I don't remember, that's terrible.

MK: So, probably, you can't remember any Waikīkī Elementary School PTA or . . .

EB: No. I don't remember anything of that sort.

MK: And then, while you were going to Washington Intermediate, say, your after-school activities.

EB: I played ball. So that was then volleyball and basketball, which is what I liked most of all. I had also by that time joined a choir, the Kawaiaha'o choir. I joined it. So, every Monday it was rehearsal. So, I would go to school, and then from there I would go right to rehearsal down at Kawaiaha'o Church. That kept me away from things that, you know, I would have done otherwise. But as far as playing ball and dancing, if the school had a program and if the program was going to be Hawaiian, then I would be part of it. Then when I got into the operetta, we had practiced it for, oh, I don't know how many months before we actually put it on. That kept me after school, too. So by the time that was over, my ninth-grade year was just about over. So, then from there, we all, all the intermediate

schools, graduated at one time at the stadium.

MK: All of them?

EB: All of them. Every one. Lili'uokalani, Washington, Kalākaua, Central, Kawānanakoa--I think I got all of it--Kalākaua. We all graduated one time.

MK: You were telling me last time something about the certificate.

EB: Yes. You'll find out by looking in the back of your certificate whether you had been recommended to go to high school. In other words, whether you passed. Those that didn't pass didn't go to McKinley [High School]. Lot of them didn't go on to high school. So, it's been funny because now that you think back, you think about the kids that didn't go through. Of course, you can't remember very many of them. But you often wonder, what did they do since they didn't go to school. See, because while I was at Washington [Intermediate School], the intermediate schools had a football league. I was song leader for Washington [Intermediate School]. So, there again, I was busy with that. When I went to McKinley [High School], those that went to intermediate with me--I just met a woman about three years ago. She thought I was a song leader at McKinley [High School]. But she had gone to school with me, you know. And I said, "No. I wasn't over there."

"Oh, yes." And she starts to sing the songs.

But I said, "No. That was when we were at Washington [Intermediate School] that I was a song leader over there for two years." And then, went on to McKinley [High School]. But I never did try out at McKinley [High School] because most of the song leaders from the other intermediate schools--I mean, most of the song leaders tried out, but for some reason I didn't want to. I wanted to, and then I didn't want to. I guess I didn't want to lose, so I didn't want to get up there and then find out that I wasn't going to get picked. But I don't remember whether it was voting by the student body for the girls or whether it was picked by the advisor, whatever it was. But anyhow, I didn't.

MK: You had an active intermediate school . . .

EB: Yeah, I was over there because of the operetta, and then I played ball, and then football season, I was with that. But after that, football season got over, what, just about Thanksgiving time, and then I went into the operetta.

MK: I know that about the time you graduated from intermediate school, about 1932, your father passed away.

EB: Yeah.

MK: I was wondering, how did the family manage after your father passed away?

EB: That's a very good question. I'm able to sort of fill it out more now that I'm older. My dad had an insurance policy. He died when he was only forty-nine, and he was still working. At that time, I guess he was too young to get any retirement. I don't know if he had any retirement, but he had this piddly little insurance. The insurance had to be used to cover the funeral expenses. In addition to that, my dad was the best handyman for everybody else's house but ours. So, we had to fix our house up. Because that then left my sister, my mother and myself.

I don't remember exactly when, but my mother was quite active in the Republican Party. I can't remember his name, now--the mayor, Mayor Blaisdell? No, not Blaisdell, way back. [The mayor's name was George F. Wright.] Anyway, she was able to get a job at City Hall as a janitress. At that time, I was in high school. My sister was a junior at University and had one more year to go. I remember my dad, sick as he was, calling her in and making her promise that "you'll finish school."

So, she says, "I will. Don't worry, Dad." She says, "I will."

In the meantime, I was just going into high school, because he died the same summer. I think I graduated in June; he died maybe the latter part of June, but it was very close. The reason I'm thinking about it is because I had to have a white dress for graduation. I also used it for my dad's funeral. You know, because it was white. In those days, you had to wear white when somebody dies. At least, my mother made me do that. But I think that was about it.

So, our house was fully paid. So it was just a matter of utilities and food. So we sold my dad's car because my mother didn't drive and I was too young to drive. They didn't know it, but I was driving it already. Because my dad would leave it home and go to work. So, I would back it all the way out to the Hamohamo Road and it was 100 feet deep where our garage was. So before I got to the end of the garage, I would go through the three shifts already because those days were all standard shifts. They didn't have any automatic. I think if I remember correctly, I started driving when I was about ten years old. I would back all the way out and then I'd drive in until I got real good at that. So then I'd call my cousin, that Padeken girl. The car was getting old because my dad used to use it with my uncle and them to go fishing, and they'd put the net on it. My dad never used to go wash the salt off of the car and she started to rust and fall apart. And the engine, like I said, my dad would do everything for everybody else except for himself. So I'd tell my cousin, I said, "You want to go for a ride?"

So she says, "Where we going?" And we're just two kids.

I'd say, "Let's go around the block."

So she says, "Okay."

I'll say, "But you sit close to me and you hold the hand brake." Because the foot brake wasn't working. So I'd say to her, "If I tell you pull, you pull on that brake because we're coming to a stop sign."

So she says, "Okay."

So, there's the two of us going down the street. We go up Paoakalani [Avenue], up to the canal. But first, I'd go around Kāneloa Road and I'd come back. Wow! We did good. Go back around and come back. But I had to get that car home before my dad got home from work. So by the time I got through I was going all the way up to Ala Wai [Canal], coming, and then come home, she and I. She'd hold the brakes. "Okay, pull." Pull. She'd pull the brakes. All right. Open it, then pull off, and come. The shifting, I knew, you know, because I used to watch my dad. You see what a crazy thing I was. My sister wouldn't do it. Yet she was way older than I and she could have gotten her license. And here I was. I was the one that was doing all of these crazy things.

So that's how we got along after my dad died. It was a very, very frugal livelihood because of that. I think at that time the group insurance that he had was something like $2,500. But then, everybody says, at that time, that was a lot of money. Today, I could spend it in one hour, you know. But we had the house repaired. We paid off a mortgage balance, and that was it. So my mother's salary was very, very small. But yet, we didn't have anything to pay except food and all of that. And then, my sister graduated and then got married. So then, it was she that was helping us at home. Because her husband worked on the ship, see. We were still just the three of us, and we had a big house. So then, we adopted--not adopted--we hanaied my cousin's son because she died when he was only about five or six months old. My mother went to get the baby because the husband or the father of that baby couldn't very well stay home and take care of the child, so my mother brought the baby home. And he's now fifty years old. And that was it.

I always say, and I don't know whether I'm right when I say this, but wanting to go to college was one thing. But I think my sister just fouled me all up because she graduated in June and got married in September and never ever went to a job where she needed a certificate of that sort. But I can remember telling her, I said, "Boy, if I had that, I could sure put it to good use."

She said, "Just don't get smart. I'm happy the way I am."

So, that was the whole thing. I decided I'm not going to go [to college]. Why should I go and take a foreign language. I hated math. Why should I go and take math, and then take a foreign language and all of that there. So I said no. So I decided to go into commercial [course of study].

MK: So, after Washington Intermediate, you went to McKinley High [School].

What did you major in at McKinley High [School]?

EB: Commercial. There again, I'm the crazy one. The person that I was going to work for, I think I mentioned it, he told me that I didn't need shorthand. But I had already started it. I had already had about one year of typing at intermediate school and I had two years at McKinley [High School]. So that gave me three years. And I loved typing. Typing is my baby, you know. I liked that. So, I took shorthand, and I took bookkeeping, and I took commercial, whatever that was necessary at the time. So when he told me that I didn't need shorthand, I needed bookkeeping, I dropped shorthand. Until today, I keep thinking, how foolish. When I went to work, I had to go back to Cannon's [School of Business] and pay to pick up on my shorthand again because by the time, I dropped it at the end of the first semester. The head of the shorthand department called me in. She couldn't understand why. "Why are you doing it?" She said, "If you were failing, I could see you wanting to drop it. But you're doing fine." And she said, "Why are you dropping it?"

"Well, I found out I didn't need it for this guy's job." Also, it was my first class for the day and I didn't want to get up that early if I didn't have to use that subject, you see. But I had already gone through one semester. And that, I felt, gave me a good start. So I said, I was going to give it up. Oh, she just got after me and tried to get me to change my mind, but I refused. I know now how stupid that was, you know, to do that. But you're young, you're sixteen years old, you think you know it all. So I said, no, I didn't want.

MK: So what other commercial courses did you take? You dropped your shorthand . . .

EB: I dropped shorthand. Well, see, another thing, too, at that time, all we needed, I think, I'm not sure whether I'm right or not, but I think all I needed or all all of us needed was only twelve credits to graduate. I already had twelve. So I figured, "Why do I want more? I'm not going to University [of Hawai'i]." And I had whatever I need to graduate. That was my sole subject to graduate. Because I could remember my father, too, you see. And I thought I was going to have this job which didn't pan out when I graduated. I think he just went out of business or something.

MK: What kind of business did that man . . .

EB: Real estate. I was going to go into his real estate office. But I give him credit for the advice he gave my sister and I. Now, I'm going back again to intermediate [school] time. When my dad died, we had properties. We had 5,000 here and we had 5,000 where you know I said we raised chickens, and we had a taro patch, and sugar cane, and all of that there. But because we had a balance on the mortgage over here, we had to sell that in order to pay this one off. If I remember correctly, and I think I do, the balance on that mortgage was something like $400. Later on, my sister and I

would get together and we'd say, "If we were only old enough to go get a job." Four hundred dollars! So we sold the place next to us for $1200. Now, it's worth $200,000 or very close to it because of the area. But it wasn't worth that much at that time. But we had to do it in order to keep the property. To keep this one. So, that really, with discussing it before we sold it, was my sister's property. See, my dad had two, one here and one here. But this one had the house on, so we sold the lot. That's how Hawaiian Electric [Company] bought it. That's all they paid for it.

So, I went down to see Hawaiian Electric [Company] quite a number of years after. I was married. I was working for Castle & Cooke, [Inc.]. I went to see the vice-president I think he was, and I asked that if at any time they decide that they want to sell it, would they give me preference being that we were the original owners and we're the ones that they bought it from. They said yes. But they didn't put it on paper. You know how those things come in when they least expect it. So then I went to the Castle & Cooke, [Inc.] land department and asked them to check into it. So they did and came back. Because there was a long time between calls if I got any at all, and I thought, gee whiz. Because they told me that they were going to sell it. They called me and said they were going to sell it. I got so excited about that. So I came home, I told my husband, "Guess what? We have a chance to buy that property back." So we were all set to do it. Then I waited, and I waited, and waited, and no word came. That's how I had my department [at Castle & Cooke, Inc.] check with Hawaiian Electric [Company]. So they came back and said that they had heard that they're going to widen Kūhiō Avenue. And if they do that, it'll be worth more money. So they were going to hold out. "But if we decide to sell, we will still let you know first."

MK: So that was that.

EB: So that was the end of that. Because when they widened Kūhiō Avenue, then when we went into this condo, the developer wanted to buy Hawaiian Electric [Company] out. Hawaiian Electric [Company] said with the population here, they needed a substation. So what the developer did, he went across the street, bought the property there, and told Hawaiian Electric [Company] to move across. And they did. And bought them out over here. So he really went into quite a bit, you know, to get this portion.

And then, at the time we sold it to Hawaiian Electric [Company], this fellow that I was going to work for, he was their real estate broker. So at the finish of the sale of the property, he called my sister and I together. I was fourteen, I guess, when my dad died. My sister was about seventeen. So he said, "I want you two girls to make me a promise." So we both looked at him and wondered, chee, what is he trying to do? This is a Haole guy, you know.

So, my sister said, "What kind of a promise?"

He said, "Don't ever let Mother sell this property. Someday it's going to be worth a lot of money." And he wasn't wrong.

And when I thought to myself, "You monkey, why did you make us sell the other one?" But we had to do it. If he didn't buy it, somebody else would've. But that's what he made my sister and I promise. Don't let Mother ever, ever. He said, someday--but he put a price on it. And I think at the time we sold the other side, maybe it was only about fifty cents a square foot. Because we sold it for $1,200 and that was 5,000 square feet. That would come up to about what? Twenty-five cents, maybe. When he said that to us, he said, "Someday, it'll be worth ten dollars a square foot." Well, it's triple or whatever it is now. It's certainly not ten dollars a square foot.

I said to my husband, "You know, he had a foresight." But he died before everything started to go. And it just kept going higher and higher, and higher and higher. So rather than us staying with that 5,000 square feet, we bought this one right back here. So we bought another 5,000 square foot on Cartwright [Road] side. So our property ran from Cartwright [Road] right through to Kūhiō [Avenue] on the other side.

MK: But that was way later that you bought the Cartwright [Road] property.

EB: We bought the Cartwright property about 1947 or '48. We bought it. It was owned by a Mr. Donnelly. A William Donnelly.

MK: Getting back to our earlier time period that we were talking about, I know that you took commercial course work at McKinley [High School]. What kinds of activities were you involved in at McKinley [High School]?

EB: Well, there again, I played in sports. And that, in most cases, was afternoon. I played basketball and I got the award for the all-around athlete because of the different sports I was in. I wasn't outstanding in it, but I was in volleyball, I was in basketball, and I was in badminton, and I was in tennis. You know, all of them. Because I loved sports. I would play anything. The only game I don't like is baseball. I don't like to play it. And yet, I found out that my dad was a terrific baseball player in Maui. I didn't know that. He never said anything. I could throw, I could pitch, I couldn't hit. So many years after that, I decided, "Eh, I don't want to play that." I'd rather play volleyball. That was my game. This baseball coach told me that he could have trained me. And I said, "What do you mean?"

He says, "To learn to bat, you've got to know how to stand. You've got to know how to watch the ball. You got to know your timing."

I'm not much bigger now than what I was when I was in high school, because I was always a big girl. When it's my turn to come up to bat, everybody goes way out in the field, anticipating me hitting it all the way. And I would strike out. Either that or I'd hit a pop ball and the pitcher would catch it or somebody way inside

would catch it. I'd think, "Oh, I hate that game." And along comes my granddaughter that is tremendous in it. She plays like a man, she's so good. But I didn't like it. But I liked everything else.

See, for physical ed [education] at McKinley [High School], and if I played tennis, we'd have to go all the way down to Ala Moana Park to the tennis courts. And that's walking through all that coral back there. Because there were no buildings, nothing. It was just empty. And you know, the McKinley High School, the football field, well, the physical ed building was right on the side of it back there. And we'd walk down to Ala Moana to play and then come back. I don't know how we did that in that short a time, but we did.

MK: How about in the neighborhood during your high school days? Were you participating in sports?

EB: No, not in the neighborhood. No, I was with school. I was with the school at that time. Because McKinley [High School] had a team which I was part of. We played Roosevelt [High School], we played Kam School [i.e., Kamehameha Schools], we played, you know, for the girls. But those days, there again, the rules were so much different than they are today. Like basketball, they'd keep us in one little [half court]. . . . And I'd get so angry with that because I've always played in our schoolyard over here with the boys in the neighborhood. We'd run the whole court, you know. I'd foul so many times [at school], because, not thinking, I'd run into the other side where I'm not supposed to be. I thought, "Oh, boy, I got to learn to stay in my own corner."

But then, the neighborhood sort of fell out of the whole thing. Except by that time, Hamohamo Road was opened up; Kūhiō Avenue came in as an avenue, but we still had that little lane. And this little lane wasn't started until, I don't know, it's only about two years old now. The Kūhiō Avenue widening. Because our property right out front here has been cut in about 2,400 square feet, which meant that my portion of the property and my husband's is way smaller than what it was when we came in.

MK: So, it was about that time that Kūhiō Avenue came in. Hamohamo Road was . . .

EB: Hamohamo Road was out. When they opened it, see, then they joined Kūhiō which stopped at 'Ōhua. See, Kūhiō came in from Kalākaua by the old Lau Yee Chai all the way down to 'Ōhua Avenue and it stopped. On this side, it began again by Paoakalani [Avenue] as Hamohamo Road. And we thought, "What a crazy thing." So when they opened it, it became Kūhiō [Avenue] all the way through.

MK: You know, when they opened it all the way through, what happened to the families who may have been living in that area?

EB: They didn't have anybody living there. It was that big empty lot

like. If I remember correctly, that whole area there belongs to the Liliu'okalani Estate. And wherever they had houses, it wasn't a whole thing like it is now. I mean, a whole court or whatever, no. It was maybe one house over here, and there was another one down there, and another one. We'd play in between that because it was all empty. All coral, you know. So, that was the only thing.

MK: So, you graduated from McKinley [High School] in 1935, right?

EB: [Nineteen] thirty-five.

MK: So, by that time, those changes had occurred in the neighborhood?

EB: Oh, yeah. You mean, the breaking through? Yes, it had.

MK: What other changes occurred, say, in the businesses around the neighborhood or houses . . .

EB: They stayed. They all stayed the way they are. Well, Mama-san [Miyo Asuka] was here. At the time Mama-san [Miyo Asuka] moved in, it was a court of four houses, I think. One, two, three, four, and then her house. She had a big house, upstairs and down. She did laundry downstairs and they lived upstairs. The Ewaliko family had a cottage, an area there where they had duplexes. They lived in their house which was a big house, too. And then, next to them was the Williams, then Kaawakauo, and then the Parker. But it's hard to put your finger right on when they did it, you know. Like, what's his name? "Buckwheat" [i.e., Mervin Richards]? He sold out his place, too. Right next to him was this Japanese, two houses. One in the front and one in the back. On the other side of him was the Joy family, the one that was right at the corner. But they sort of slide away where you can't really put your finger on when it was done.

MK: How about the business section where you had Ibaraki Store, and you had Tahara's, and Aoki's, and the dry cleaners. That area in the 1935 period. Anything . . .

EB: Oh, no. They were all there. Because I can remember my kids going down there. I'd send them down to the store or they'd go down to the beach and then come across and go and get an ice cream cone or whatever from the store. So, they were still there. My daughter was born 1941, so this would be after the war.

MK: How about in the area that you called 'Āinahau? By the time you graduated from McKinley [High School] . . .

EB: Still the same. Just before they did away with the. . . . You remember Waikīkī was called the Jungle? The Waikīkī Jungle? Well, that Jungle started at Paoakalani [Avenue] all the way down to Ka'iulani [Avenue]. They had all these old houses, and the owners had cut it up and made studios and made one-bedrooms. They had people there that were [on] welfare, and people there that were

doing everything that we thought wasn't what it should be like. To us, even though we feel bad about the progress of the area, to get rid of all of those houses was a big asset, I think. Because now, you have nice-looking hotels. It's just too bad that it's as high as it is. But it's kept the place nice and clean. They all have yardmen out there cleaning up the yard, where before, the yards were terrible. They had all automobile seats on their front porches and they would sit there. If you have to pass there to come home, you think, "Oh, gosh." But to me, to get rid of it was really good, even though what they put back everybody's grumbling about that. But to me, that's part of progress.

MK: About when did they get rid of all that Jungle area?

EB: I'd say it was after the war [i.e., World War II].

MK: After the war. You know, before the war, how much tourism did you notice in Waikīkī? By then, you had the Royal Hawaiian [Hotel], you had the Halekūlani [Hotel]. How much tourism did you notice?

EB: Very little. The reason for that--before the war now--the reason for that was, most of the tourists that came here came by boat. There were very little, if any, airplanes at all. So, we had a better class of people. They were rich in order to get here. Otherwise, they couldn't afford that boat trip or that ship. So, I think a lot of us sort of put them on a pedestal because we'd say, "Wow, they gotta be rich to come over here. We don't have that kind of money." And they stay at the Royal Hawaiian [Hotel], and they stay at the Moana [Hotel]. They go to all these different functions. We didn't have any buses like we do now. But the tourists were all there.

And for some reason--here's another thing that I thought was real cute. They never came beyond St. Augustine Church. In other words, we were the junky area of Waikīkī, from Paoakalani [Avenue] over to Kapahulu [Avenue]. And I think the reason for that was because the hotels were down further, and they would only go to the Royal [Hawaiian Hotel], they go to Halekūlani [Hotel], they go to Niumalu Hotel. There's another one that was down there, Niumalu Hotel. And what was that other one down there?

MK: Halekūlani, the Moana, Niumalu. . . .

EB: Hawaiian Village. They were the ones that was down there. They never came this way. They all stayed down there. The farthest they would come in a big group would be Ka'iulani [Avenue]. Because the Moana was right there. And we didn't have the [Princess] Ka'iulani Hotel. When that came up, they knocked down all those cottages that were there and they put up the [Princess] Ka'iulani Hotel. But our side, and we used to say, "Oh, how good. Let the tourists stay on the other side." We would be free because we'd have all the local people on this side. But now, they're all over! So, that was the reason. I mean, we never had anything to do with

them, let's put it that way. They came, they did their own thing. They went down to the beach. They had the beach boys that catered to them. Took them out surfing, canoe rides, and all of that there. But it never bothered us because we never associated with them. They probably didn't want to associate with us. So, the feeling was mutual. We didn't care.

MK: I know that in 1936 you got married. I was wondering, who did you marry?

EB: I married Albert Bader.

MK: How did you two meet?

EB: There again, it goes back to sports. My husband was working on the inter-island ships. I was rowing. I was a senior in high school at the time. So, I was rowing, and our rowing clubhouse, let's say, was down at Pier 15. Right across was where my husband's ship would be docking. When we're out there rowing, they would be through with their work or whatever and they'd all sit on the side watching us. So, they'd yell for whoever they think they'd want to. Because we'd go out, one crew would go out. We worked very closely with the fire department. And whenever the fire department was ready to go out. . . . See, I was stroking a crew, and that would be the first one in the front. I set the timing. The coxswain is right in front of me. He's the one who would tell me what he wanted, and then I would do it, and the rest would follow me.

So, we'd go there, and if my club is out with the boat, the fire department is short one person for their crew, they call me to go out with them. I would get in the boat and go out, but with them, they're all men and they're all strong. It's just keeping in time. They needed the weight balance, because you sit like this, see. Everybody sits opposite each other. So when you get off the boat, you get off in twos. Because you're not right back of each other. You gotta balance the ship. You see, I'm saying "ship." And then, two get off, and then two get off, and then two, because we had two, four, six.

My husband and them would be sitting on the other side, you see. So, later on, when we'd be all through, we'd start throwing each other in the water to go swimming in the harbor. The water was nice and clean, and we were just hot and perspiring, and everything. We were all in shorts, and there's a shower inside that we would plan to go in and take a shower. So, whoever would grab the first one and throw you in the water, well, then you're in. So, when one throws one, then everybody else is going to jump in the water, too. That's how I met my husband, because he was one of those that was sitting on the other side.

MK: How did he ever say hello to you, or. . . .

EB: Well, because first of all, they'd begin to wave to us. Because

we're practicing every, every day. If you see the same people every day, you going to end up saying "Hi," or "How are you," or "Chee, did you folks just come in," or "Are you leaving tonight?" Because we couldn't care less about their schedule of shipping. But they were all members of the crew, and they would not have to sail maybe until 8:00 tonight and we would start practicing at about 4:00. So they'd come out there and sit about 5:00 and watch us, or 4:30 and watch us. To them, it was something to do, rather than stay in their room unless they were a book lover. You know, then, but none of those guys are. They would rather go out to a bar and have a beer or something. So that's how we got to know one another.

MK: After you folks got to meet each other and everything, where did you folks actually get married?

EB: We got married at St. Elizabeth's Church up in Palama. The reason we got married there is because the father that was at the church at that time was my husband's religious education teacher at 'Iolani [School]. So, when we decided to get married, we went up to see Father Kieb. I had never met him before. But my husband took me up and introduced me to Father Kieb and asked him whether he would marry us. So, he said, "Sure." But it wasn't a big wedding because we got married in the side parish rather than the big church. Because it was just my mother, and my witnesses, and his. And then, we came home after the wedding. My mother called my sister from church that we were on our way home. Because we had a little luau for, I don't know, seventy-five people, maybe 100, whatever. But I can remember my mother wanting to invite, so I said, "I don't know them. I don't want them."

Say, "What about . . . "

Say, "No, I don't want them. I don't want them."

And my husband is a shy person, too. He's from the other island, so he had really no one here except his sisters to invite.

So, here I was. My mother said, "You got to be crazy." She said, "Here I am trying to do this, and you say, 'No, no, no, no. I don't know this one. I don't want that one. I don't want that one. Never, don't do that.'"

So, we came home, and we had our luau. And then, my husband and I, we never even had a honeymoon, because we were going to stay with my mother and my sister. Because the house was big enough. My husband worked on the ships, my brother-in-law worked on the ships. So we still ended up with us three women.

MK: What was your husband's job until 1951?

EB: My husband started off as a stevedore on the pier. And then, he started to relieve workers on the ship, and then began to think that "If I don't do some studying, I'm going to end up being a manual worker

the rest of my life." So, he started to study and went to the Coast Guard to get his license. Then he became what we call a deck officer. So, he worked his way up from a third officer, second officer, chief officer, and then got his master's license. So, he's really done quite a bit. Then, in 1950, Inter-Island [Steam Navigation Co.] folded up. So, this company or person took one ship, the Humu'ula, and that's the ship that he went to work on.

But he had to go back to sea, because he had in the meantime switched jobs with another fellow and took the job on shore. He was superintendent on the docks. The guy took his job on the ship because he had to put in time on his license in order to get a higher license. You see, whenever you get one, you've got to put a year's work in that capacity. Then you sit and you study and you take the test for the next one. And then, you do a year on that before you could move on. You've got to put time on it. You can't just go and say, "Well, I'm going take the master's license." You can't do that. You got to go right up the stairs. So, this is what he had to do.

MK: He put a lot of effort into it.

EB: He had to. He had a family to support. This is what he always says. A lot of the fellows today don't realize the responsibility they take on when they get married. He said, "There were many times I wanted to quit." But he said, "I felt I had a family and couple of kids to take care of." So, he said, "I couldn't afford to do that." But in the meantime, he kept moving ahead. I don't think you have, but I can remember the salaries at that time were so small. I think even as a third officer, I think his salary was something like $125 a month. But he lived on the ship, he ate on the ship. His job was on the ship.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 13-15-3-85

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Esther (Jackson) Bader (EB)

March 14, 1985

Waikīkī, O'ahu

BY: Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mrs. Esther Jackson Bader at her home in Waikīkī, Honolulu, Hawai'i on March 14, 1985. The interviewer is Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay. Mrs. Bader, you had your children in 1937, 1940, and 1941, . . .

EB: Right.

MK: . . . stayed at home for a while, but right before the war . . .

EB: No. That was a little different. I always worked at the [pineapple] cannery. Ever since I was old enough to go to the cannery, and that was way back, I worked at the cannery. So by the time I got married, I was already a forelady at the cannery. So when I had my children, during the summer months, I would go back to work, and come back home after the season is over, and then I'm home again until the next summer. So my mother was the one that stayed home or was home at the time to take care of the kids. When she started to work, then I got the neighborhood kids to come over and take care of the kids. Because my mother's job didn't start until 4:00 in the afternoon. So, in the morning, I'd go to work, she's home. Before she leaves for work, the girl comes over and stays with kids. I'm normally home, depending on what the quitting hour is at the cannery. So, this is the set-up for going to work while having the children.

My husband didn't want me to work on a full-time base, even though I had the commercial background, because he felt that the children were more important, that I should stay home. On top of that, he would come in in the morning and sailed at night. He was never home overnight. Come in about two days later and go out that afternoon; and then, come in again two days later and go out that night. So this is the kind of routine we both lived on. On those conditions, he said, "No way are you going to go to work because I'm not even home." He says, "If you were working, by the time you get home, it's time for me to sail." So, that was the reason why I didn't go until the war [World War II] started.

Before the war [World War II] started, I was working at the cannery. The war started December 7, [1941]. That summer, I worked at the cannery, and, like I say, I was a forelady. So just about time of the end of season, there were groups of people that were going down to Pearl Harbor [Naval Shipyard] to apply for a job. So, I came home, I told my sister about it, and then she and I went down to apply. And that's how we started. We both started in September of nineteen--what was it--forty. . . .

MK: [Nineteen] forty-one?

EB: [Nineteen] forty-one. We both went to work on Ford Island where all the airplanes were.

MK: What was your job?

EB: We both applied as laborers. And like I think I mentioned how embarrassed my sister was because she had a degree and she was a college grad. But she was embarrassed to think that she was going into a labor job so she didn't show her college degree. I had a high school certificate and that was it, so it didn't matter. I didn't work, but I had clerical background in school. But that was how many years. I got out of school in '35, I started out there in '41. But to me, clerical [training] stays with you, and all you need is practice, you bring it all back again. The only thing I couldn't use and didn't use out there was shorthand, but I didn't care because I wasn't sure about myself and I didn't finish the book. I was out there from 1941. In 1944, I'm not sure but I think it's so, because the war ended in '45. At the time the war ended, I left the navy yard and I came in to work for the army transport. I don't remember what year that was, but it was during the war. Our office was in the Castle & Cooke, [Inc.] building on Merchant Street. So, that was the thing.

And then, when the war ended. . . . Because from there, this is all military, now, and civil service jobs. I worked Ford Island, then I came into Castle & Cooke, [Inc.] with the army transport. Then I went across to Sand Island. We used to get the bus and go down to the Pier 11--you know where the Lurline docks? We'd get on the boat over there, furnished by Coast Guard. The boat would take us right across the harbor. We'd get off on Sand Island side, and then we'd get on one of those long streetcar things, and then go to the office. Come back that way, come back over to the town side, catch a bus, and come home.

Well, then, I thought at the time I didn't care too much about that, so I think I went at that time to the [Hawaiian] Telephone Company. I was only there for a couple of months. I wasn't very happy there because I knew I was terrible in math and they put me in payroll department but supposedly as a clerk-typist. At that time, they told me how lucky I was because they were going to pay me eightyfive cents an hour and had I not had any prior experience it would have been eighty cents an hour. And I thought, "Eighty

cents an hour?" But anyway, I wanted to get out of federal civil service, and now I feel that might have been the wrong thing to do. Who knows?

MK: Why did you want to get out of federal civil service?

EB: Because (sighs) every time a new officer came in, he would change the whole thing. He's usually with us for about two years and, boom, you get a new officer or a new officer comes in. He wants this done this way and he wants that done that way. Okay, you no sooner get familiar with this, another officer comes. And I thought, "I'm not going to be doing this." So, I had made up my mind that from then on, I was only going to work for one person and that was it. I'm not going to be going from one person to another. And I might be wrong, but I felt like one of the officers that I had was a Southerner and he was very, very rude to anybody that wasn't from the Mainland. You could just feel it. So, my feelings were, "Why should I take all of this? This is my island, this is my home. He's in the wrong place, not me." So, with those things piling up, I decided, no, I'm not going to take any of that, so I left and went to the telephone company.

Then, I found out that one of the men that worked with me (at) army transport went to work for Castle & Cooke, [Inc.] as a passenger agent. So, I called him up from the telephone company and I asked him. I said, "Tell me something. Do they hire only Haoles or do we local people have a chance to go to work for Castle & Cooke?" Because that was Big Five, you know.

And he said, "Oh, yeah." He said, "Why? Aren't you working?"

I said, "Yes, but I'm not happy here because I'm doing work that I don't like."

So, he said, "Okay." He says, "There's nothing now, but when something opens up, I'll call you."

Well, within two weeks, he called back. He said, "Are you still interested?"

I said, "Yes!" I nearly jumped out of my chair.

So, he says, "What time do you go to lunch?"

I said, "I go to lunch about quarter of twelve."

So he said, "Well, come on over for an interview."

So, I walked from the telephone company down to the Castle & Cooke, which is right at the corner of Merchant and Bishop [Streets], went in for my interview, and the fellow that I was going to work for said, "When can you start?"

I said, "Well, gee, I've got to go back and give them notice. I just can't quit and go off like this."

So I went back to the telephone company and gave notice. I gave them two weeks' notice. My boss there was very nice. He says, "I can understand why you're doing this." He says, "It really isn't what you were hired to do, but your job is this and that's the only thing right now." And if I didn't want to wait, that was it.

I also went down at the telephone company. They had customer service positions open. So, I went down there to apply. My reason for that was because I was with the hiring portion of the army transport ships. I did all the interviewing for the crew that came down to get a job to go out to the ships to work. So, that part of it, I was experienced. But when I went down to apply, I think they were already unionized so seniority had first chance at it. If two of us went, and if you'd been there longer than I have, you would have gotten the job. Well, that discouraged me, too, and I thought, "Gee whiz, how long do I have to be here to get something other than posting time?" Every day, my basket would be that high with timesheets coming in from all these different areas. And then, at the end of the pay period, you multiply that by the amount of money that they make. If you're off two cents, which would be me, I'd sit there and wonder where it is. I didn't have a sister that would tell me where it is in three minutes. So, that's how I started with Castle & Cooke, [Inc.]. And this is way back in, I think it was June of 1946.

MK: What was your first job at Castle & Cooke, [Inc.]?

EB: I was a clerk-typist, I guess. You see, normally, when I started, all of the kids were all right out of high school more or less. So the kids all started in the mailroom. That way, they could get them to know the people. See, but my background was with the ships and I went directly into the steamship department because that's where they were going to start a new department. So, the fellow that I was interviewed by told me, he says, "Look. We don't have a desk for you. We don't even have a typewriter so far. So, go back where you are, give them your notice, and then when we're all set and you're all set, then come back." So, that's how I started. But I went in there like a steno but not taking any shorthand or anything because I was afraid to go that far and then do a flop. So, I said, no, I didn't want to do that. But as far as the crew, the union, and rules for the union, rules for the company, I had that because of my ship's experience with the army with federal. So, after a while, I decided I better go back to school and brush up on my shorthand. So I went to Cannon's [School of Business]. They had classes at 4:30 in the afternoon. So, I'd get through work at 4:00, and walk up the street, go to class. I took two classes. I took shorthand and I took business English. I wanted that part of it, because I'm going to have to do my letters by form, form words.

So, I stayed there until 1962. Because at that time, we were agents

for Matson [Navigation Company], and Matson ships was the ones that I worked with. So, when Matson decided to take the ships away from Castle & Cooke and open their own office, then about sixty-five of us went over to Matson as Matson employees. But we went with all of the plans, the vacations, the whatever. The only thing we couldn't take with us was a profit-sharing plan. But we had the same working hours. We never worked on Saturdays. We only worked seven hours a day, where everybody else was working eight hours. We'd have an hour for lunch, and work seven hours a day. That was the whole thing. So when we went to Matson, Matson just carried it on because Castle & Cooke were their agents for many years. Then, Matson started to get bigger, and bigger, and bigger. And it seems like Castle & Cooke was going the other way. So, that was it.

MK: When did you retire?

EB: I retired January 1, 1983.

MK: You know, going back to the World War II period when you working for the federal government, you talked about how scary it was going to work then from Waikīkī and coming home.

EB: Well, it's coming home that was scary because we had three shifts. We had 7:00 [a.m.] to 3:00 [p.m.], 3:00 [p.m.] to 11:00 [p.m.], and 11:00 [p.m.] to 7:00 [a.m.]. So, we'd work one month on one shift and the next month on the next one. All, everybody, had to be off the street as soon as it was dark. We all had pencil flashlights. We had buses that would pick us up at Dole Corporation. At that time, they had a big, big, huge area of just open [space]. We would come in from Ford Island by boat over to Pearl Harbor itself. We get off that launch, get on our buses that all goes to Dole Corporation. When we get there, we look for our neighborhood bus. But how can you see it when it's so dark? No lights, no nothing.

So, I was on the bus that was supposed to be Waikīkī-Kapahulu. The first bus stop in my bus was the Moana Hotel. Well, we had a lot of workers from the Mainland that was sent down here. Like they call it "Seabees," or whatever. A lot of them would get on the wrong bus because they're not really accustomed to the islands and it's dark. The part that used to frighten me no end was half of these guys from Pearl Harbor would come in on the train, and the train would come right into Dole. But to be sure they got on the right bus, and to be sure they would have the seat, they'd jump off the train through the windows while it's still going. And we'd come in by buses before the train comes in, so we're all on the bus waiting for them to come in because the bus don't move until that train comes in. And I'm thinking, "My God, some of those guys are going to die." But nothing happened. They'd jump off of the train and they'd come running to the bus.

I was the only woman on my bus. Although my husband was home sometimes, he couldn't come out to the street to meet me because by the time I got home, it would have been midnight. He'd have to

stay home. So the bus would stop up there on Kapahulu [Avenue], and I had just this little light. That apartment right over there at the corner, that three-story apartment building, was all koa trees in there. Anybody could have been in there hiding and just waiting for me to come back. So that bus driver was so nice. He'd stop the bus, and he'd say to me, "All right. Go in the front of the bus. Don't go in the back." He would stay there until I crossed Kapahulu Avenue. I'd cross that. When I really get inside, I could hear him starting off. As soon as I hear him starting off, I'd run to get into our yard before anybody could get over to where I am.

We also had another guy that lived down the street. He was a Pearl Harbor employee, and his name was Alec Thompson. So, he smoked a cigar, and when I get to the bus, I'm looking for this cigar lighted thing, you know. As soon as I see it, I'd say, "Alec."

And he say, "Yeah, I'm over here."

So, I say, "Okay." Well, then I'm safe because he and I walk in together. But when he's not on that bus, I run all the way in. But for some reason, I never worked the midnight to 7:00 [a.m.], because it was hard to get down there. Maybe they didn't have that, but that was the men that had that. So, I worked the morning shift up until 3:00 [p.m.], and then catch the ferry, come back to town. And then when we get off the ferry, there's that 3:00 shift going over.

MK: I was wondering, during World War II, what changes occurred in the neighborhood, you know, with blackouts, and rationing, and things of that sort during the war?

EB: Well, nobody was able to go out. We all had to paint our windows black and paint the automobile lights black with a little white center, and always have your flashlight with you, carrying your gas mask with you, too. But, see, we had quite a bit of Orientals over here, and nobody came out. So, you really never got to see very many people. I'd come in, and it's time for me to go to sleep. Then the next day, I'm up with the kids, getting them ready, whatever it is they're supposed to be doing. Because my daughter was born in May, and the war broke out in December. So, she was still a baby.

Right next to us, where the building is on right now, was the Hawaiian Electric power plant that's across the street. They put a guard in there. It was getting us scared because if he heard a noise, he'd shoot. And my mother would say, "Now, be careful. Don't go out there. If you are, call him first and let him know that you're going out." But that was it. But we had to be home. But a lot of us later were getting very risque, because we knew what time the police were changing shifts, and that was the time--if you are visiting anybody--that was the time for you to get on your car and go home, because these guys are all checking in at their different areas before they start off for their thing. And then, we had--what do you call them? Not night guards, anything, you know?

MK: Guard stations?

EB: Yeah. They'd come around, and if they see a light in your house, they shoot the light off from the road. If you forget to turn off your porch light--and your porch light is all painted except for that little light--they'd blow it off. Because to them, it had to be absolutely black.

MK: Who was your ward captain around here?

EB: I don't know. I never bothered because I was working. But just about everybody had something to do. And I think that our developer, this [Axel] Ornellas, I think his father was one of them, but I'm not so sure. I also found out that De Rego was the janitor for the school [i.e., Waikīkī Elementary School].

MK: Oh, okay. Also, you know, during World War II, there were lot of soliders in Waikīkī because the military had taken over some of the hotels. How did that affect life here for you folks?

EB: For us, it wasn't bad, because, how should I say it? We didn't bother with them, and they didn't bother in the neighborhoods. The place they would bother would be out in Kalākaua Avenue or Downtown on Fort Street. Now, I'd be working at Castle & Cooke, [Inc.], let's say. I'm going up lunchtime to have my lunch up at Fort Street someplace, and these two guys will come, one on each side of me, and just grab my arm and say, "Where shall we go?" Well, before the war ended, we hated every soldier or every navy man, or whatever, because of those things. In other words, we thought that because they thought that they were fighting for us, that anybody they wanted, they could have. That was the attitude they had.

But we had a lot of divorces with servicemen and women that were working at Pearl Harbor [Naval Shipyard]. See, because what we were doing when we first went to Pearl, we were replacing the servicemen that were yeomens and all of that. Typists and all of that. They went out for actual duty and we stepped into their jobs. So, some of those broken marriages all started from that. Because you have to realize, and I say that in (honesty), that our local husbands are not as courteous and, how should I say it? You know, you get to the door of the car, they expect you to open the door yourself, whereas these sailors and marines, they're right there. They open the door for you. You go in, they'll give you this. They let you go in first. You go with your husband, he walks in ahead of you. You want to pull him back so that you go in before him. This is the thing that everybody I knew of felt was one of the biggest causes of divorces with their local marriages. Because they never got that kind of attention from their local husbands. I can understand that because I never got it myself. But then, I used to call it to his attention. I said, "Wait a minute." I said, "You do it. What are you supposed. . . ."

He said, "Oh, what did you do? Did you break your arm or something?"

You know, that kind of thing, where I know he's just kidding. But it's not a habit with them, and it is a habit with these guys from the Mainland. They come down here, and they're so courteous. You get over there, they stand up and give up their chair. You want a glass of water, they go get it. You never get that with a local boyfriend or. . . . And I feel that that was one of the main reasons for the. . . . The dissension started with all of the attention they got that they never got at home. And then, the young girls got it, too, with no husbands. You know what I mean?

MK: People have told me that in the Waikīkī areas where they had beach boys and a lot of the local boys, when the soldiers came in, there were problems.

EB: Oh, yeah.

MK: What did you see in terms of that?

EB: Well, it wasn't what I saw; it's what I heard, really. A lot of it is because these soldiers will go and pick on a woman that the beach boys happen to know. If this woman shows that she doesn't want to be treated or whatever, they'll come in right away. Or if she calls them to come in, then there's a big fight. There's a big fight, but you have all the MPs [Military Police] and the Honolulu police and everybody is there. But that was the main thing. I just felt like that was the reason, you know. And then, poor things, they were far away from home. But they never showed it to you in a way that you felt it was a sincere gesture. Your thoughts are: they're away from home, they got no more girlfriends over here, and a girlfriend is what they would love to have even if it means as long as they're here for that time, and then when they leave that's all over. And so, you're suspicious of all of this attention that you're getting. But that was, I feel, my feeling about the thing. And I was married, see, so I had nothing at all to do with them. I would sort of think, "Oh, gosh."

MK: And then, you know, I've heard that during World War II, there were certain beach restrictions. How did that affect you folks?

EB: The beach restrictions were in areas like the Blowhole area, and the Wai'anae area, all of the places where the water's current was very strong. Because the soldiers didn't know that. I mean, the military didn't know that. As soon as they saw a beach, they went rushing in. Well, a lot of them would drown. So, then, they made it restricted. So all of the rough areas around the island were all restricted where they couldn't go in. On top of that, we had big rolls of wire. What do you call that, with all . . .

MK: Barbed wire?

EB: Barbed wire. They were all on the beach. So the local people would go through it because they'd know where to go, but these servicemen wouldn't. But then some of them would. But they'd try and play

with a girl, let's say. And it just happens that her boyfriend is there or her husband is there. Well, right there, there's a fight. They were not liked at all. And they disliked us. They disliked the island. "Oh, this rock. I wish I could get out of this rock." And the island people are saying, "I wish you would get off this rock." You know, it's that kind of a feeling. Although, you know that they're doing their share as far as fighting, but the feeling was like that.

I made several dear friends with the sailors. This one guy--they were two of them that I worked with in the office--that got to be very close. We got to be very close. When he was off duty, I had to work. So they have an off day, he gets all dressed in his white uniform, comes into the office. But he was an enlisted man. I mean, not an officer. You see, he'd come and want me to smell his aftershave lotion. And by doing that I got to get my nose close to it, you know, close to him. And then, he'd come out here to my mother's, to our house. Here's my mother ironing, and he'll sit by her and he'll drink vodka or whatever it is, and stay with her till it was time to go back. I really liked him. Another guy that did almost the same thing, except he never came out here. At the beginning of the war, because I was already there in September--before the war broke out--because I think he was killed that day. Because he told me that he was leaving on the ship, and that was the day that we were bombed. So, he might be at the bottom of Pearl Harbor. Anyway, he told me, he said, "You know, Esther, I've written to my sister, and my sister lives in Oregon. My sister has invited you, your mother, and your three children to go up and stay with her during the war."

And I thought, "Now, wasn't that nice of him to say that?" I said, "Don't be silly. I can't go to somebody strange."

He said, "No, you never know what's going to happen here." So, he said, "Take your family, take your mother." He said, "I know your husband can't go because he's working on the ships, too, but at least he'll know that you folks are safe. Go."

And so, when my husband came home, I asked him. He said, "Well, what do you think?"

So, I said, "I don't know." I never knew when my husband was coming in because everything, all the movements on the ships, were all confidential. So, I asked my mother.

She says, "I'll never leave here." She said, "If I'm going to die, I'll die right here." So. So, then, my husband built us a bomb shelter in our front yard, and my mother wouldn't go into it. She absolutely [refused]. She said, "You think we digging my own grave out here? No way!" She said, "If they going to bomb, I'll get killed, I'll get killed in the house or out in the yard. Not in that coffin thing you folks are. . . ." But that was the thing.

MK: What other families in the area had bomb shelters . . .

EB: Everybody had. It was something that you had. Otherwise, you feel, what if there was a bombing, and you don't have one? You try to run to the next door and theirs is all filled with their own family. Where would you go? No place. So, everybody dug their own. Put bags of dirt all around, and put that iron thing on the top, and put bags on the top of that, and everything. We put a radio in there because we needed that. But my mother said, "Ha! I bet you got scorpions and centipedes and everything."

I thought, "Oh, gee, I don't want to go in there, then." So, that's why, we never used ours. Never. Yet, I said to my husband, "I don't know why we built that." I said, "Mama won't go in."

He said, "Well, at least we know it's there. If you folks get desperate enough and you feel you have to go in, you'll go."

MK: You know, another thing I've heard about from people in this particular neighborhood is that for the Japanese families, some of them used to go visit the Japanese POWs [prisoners of war] held in the area.

EB: In Sand Island.

MK: Like at Sand Island or Fort DeRussy . . .

EB: Did Fort DeRussy have it?

MK: Someone said that in this vicinity, in Waikīkī. So, I was wondering what you knew about that.

EB: I didn't know they had it that close. I only understood it to be out on Sand Island. The reason I say this, I think I might have said it to you before. We had a very dear friend who was Japanese. He was; his wife was Korean. The day the war broke out, on the radio, they were calling for volunteers to go in. The volunteer meeting spot was Kewalo Basin. So, he told his wife--real Japanese, too, you know, and good, good friends--he says, "I'm going to volunteer." So, he was a contractor, that was his job.

The wife says, "Don't go." She says, "You're Japanese."

He says, "I'm an American citizen. I don't care whether I'm Japanese."

So, she says, "Don't go."

He went anyway. She never saw him for three or four days after that. Then, later on, when he finally came home, and when we all got together after, of course, she knew the story, he said they all went down. There were so many of the Oriental Japanese boys or men that went down there. He said there were all of the Marines with their guns and just got them all in there. He said, "Criminey sake, we came down there to help them. They were treating us like

we were prisoners." But you see, they never thought of themselves as Japanese. They thought of themselves as American citizens. "And we're here to help."

The guy said, "Don't talk. Get over there." So, they took him. They put him on one of those long streetcar things and took them all over to Sand Island. Got all of them from Kewalo Basin, you know Fishermen's Wharf, that whole area. They took all of these guys. And here, the radio was announcing and calling for volunteers. All of these Orientals. Well, naturally, we had more Orientals here. They all got hoisted and went down to Sand Island. And then, after questioning and all of that bit, I guess, then they were let out.

But I felt bad because our family friend that was next door, mother and father were aliens, two sisters and a brother were all American citizens. To make the decision, where do I go, you know. They couldn't get the father, especially the father, to come over and say, "America is going to win." He wouldn't admit. But he doesn't say America is going to lose. He said, "Japan no give up. Japan, everybody make. No give up."

So, when Japan gave in and the son, who's my age, now, told the father, "See, Pa? I told you, United States was going to win," he wouldn't believe.

He said, "No, Japan no give up." He went in his room and they never saw him for two days. He wouldn't come out. He was so despondent to think that Japan gave up.

MK: So it hit him pretty hard . . .

EB: Yeah, it must have. Because, you know, he had Hirohito's picture. And then, when they started--oh, that's right. They started going to all the different houses, and if you had swords, and pictures, they took it all. He was trying to hide his, and the son said, "Pa, that picture is too big. You cannot hide."

"No, no! I keep this one, I keep this one." They found it, they took it. So, that's the way it was.

We had a lot of Japanese people. The court that we had next door where (Asuka) is, they built a long one, and you could enter from two ends of their shelter. To hear the alarm go off that we're having a raid, I don't know what was wrong with me, but I just, I just couldn't lay still. As soon as I'd hear it, I'd start to shake like this. I'd start to shake and I shake. I can't keep myself still. I put my hands down and try to hold myself still, and I couldn't. My husband is next to me and I'm telling him, "Let's go get the kids."

So, he says, "Where you going?"

I said, "I don't know. But let's go get 'em and go someplace."

He said, "We're staying right here." He said, "If the kids sleep through it, it's better for them, instead of you waking them up, and they don't know what's going on, and you're rushing 'em out. You don't know where you going. And then, we got to bring 'em back." He said, "They'll never go back to sleep." Which is true.

But then, on the radio, you turn your radio on. They say, oh, they saw somebody down in Kāne'ohe trying to come ashore and all that. I'm thinking, "Oh, my God, they going to come to Honolulu in no time." But with all of that, everything worked out. My husband is a very strong person, I should say. He might not be a big man, but mentally, he's strong. Bodily, he's strong, even if his structure isn't that big.

MK: Okay. So, let's see. Okay, the war ends and during the '40s and '50s, you're raising your children, three children. What was it like raising your children in Waikīkī?

EB: My oldest boy was a surfing fiend. He would go to school and come home, change his clothes, pick up his surfboard. He's in the water until it's dark. After he gets home, shower, eat, and then studies, but he's the one that didn't care to study. So, if he's studying and he started late, and we're all ready to go to bed, he'll just close the book and go to bed, too. But then, I had the second boy that was the studious boy. He loved to read. He played the piano, and he played, you know, things like that. He didn't care as much for surfing as the older brother did. He would go, too, but not as often because he loved to play the piano. When he first went to grammar school--see, now, the oldest boy, they went to a kindergarten up here in Kapahulu called Fairyland. Then from Fairyland, they went to Jefferson [Elementary School]. Then from Jefferson [Elementary School], Stevenson [Intermediate School]. So, all of this.

And then, when my number two boy was in the sixth grade at Jefferson [Elementary School], he took the test for Kam [i.e., Kamehameha] School. He told me he wanted to take it. I said, "You sure?"

He said, "Yeah. I want to take it."

So, I said, "Okay."

So, I went up with him. I don't know whether I mentioned to you about what he said to me while he was taking the test. All us mothers were out in the hallway of this sort of an auditorium place. We were all talking, waiting for our kids to get through with the test because they were taking a test to enter the seventh grade. And then, I could hear this voice going, "Mommy."

I thought, "Chee, that sound like him, but what would he be calling me for?" And I kept talking.

He said, "Mommy!"

So, I turned, I stopped, I looked around.

And he said, "Are we under welfare?"

And I went, "No!"

So, after it was through, he came back out and he said, "What is welfare?" He didn't know what the word meant. But because he saw it there as one of the questions, "Are you or is your family under welfare?" and he didn't know whether to say yes, or no, or whatever. So, he yells that at me from the inside. All the mothers turned around. They looked at me. They started to laugh.

I kept saying, "No, we're not."

So, he goes, "Well, what are we, then?"

I said, "Just say no. That's all you need to say. I'll explain it later on."

So, when it was all over, he came out. He said, "What is that word, welfare?" Not having to be under welfare, it has never been discussed at home. He didn't know what it was.

So, I said, "Well, welfare is for people that don't have any money, and the city or the government helps to support them."

So he said, "Oh. I didn't know that word."

But, see, he went to Kam [i.e., Kamehameha School] for his seventh- and eighth-grade year, and then went to Punahou [School] his ninth-grade year. And then, graduated in '58.

MK: How about your daughter?

EB: My daughter went the same line. Jefferson [Elementary School], Stevenson [Intermediate School], Roosevelt [High School], and she got out in '59.

MK: You were telling me what you used to do as a child around the neighborhood. To your knowledge, what were your children doing around the neighborhood when they were growing up?

EB: Not very much. My daughter wasn't an athlete like I was. And my two sons would prefer going to the beach. They could stay there all day. Like comes Saturday, Saturday was our day to get the house clean. Each child had her duties or his duties. Nobody leaves this house, I don't care where they're going, until their job is done. And so, when my oldest son became---he was an all-star fullback for Roosevelt [High School]. Well, the whole football team would end up over here wanting him to go someplace with them. And I said, "He's not going anywhere."

"Why? Why can't he go?"

I said, "You tell them why you can't go."

He said, "I haven't cleaned my kitchen yet." Well, they end up, they all helping him clean the kitchen so he can go.

So, I said, "Okay. They going to help you, that's fine." I said, "But nobody else could."

But my number two boy is a perfectionist and whatever chores he has to do, he does it right away. So in addition to their Saturday and Sunday chores, during the week, they each have a week of cleaning kitchen. One clears the table, one washes the dishes, and one wipes. Or, later on, when they got older, they would do the whole thing themselves. Well, my number two son, how many times he wants to get that kitchen clean and the father and (I'm) still talking. We still have our cups of coffee. We go back to get our coffee, the coffee's gone. He's got it washed already. It's in the sink and on the thing. And I said, "We're not through."

He said, "Well, why (are) you folks talking so much? I got to go in and study."

That was the way it was with us and the kids. So, it was something that I really cherished. Because although I was a disciplinarian--and my husband backed me up on that, he never interfered--that I never had any problems. I always felt that my teachings were paid back in dividends because I never had to worry about them. At that time, luckily enough, there was no drugs. There were cigarettes, but it was the kind that you go and buy at the store. I told them, "As long as you're in school, don't you dare smoke. Because when you get out of school and go to work, then you can buy your own cigarettes." But because my two boys were athletes, they never smoked, they never drank. Neither one. Well, now, my number two boy smokes. He claims that he does that because he gets nervous. See, he's my engineer up with PG&A.

MK: And your older son is employed. . . .

EB: My oldest son is a teacher at Radford [High School] and a coach. My daughter is a teacher at Schofield. So, I have two teachers and one engineer.

MK: I know that in 1951, you said something about your original home being knocked down.

EB: Yeah.

MK: Why did that happen?

EB: Because we were going to build five more rental units on that side. So, the house was over fifty years old. That house was the same

house my mother and dad bought. That was way back in 1918. So, from '18 or '17, I really don't know, until '51, that's when we broke the house down.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: You know, in 1951, your original home was knocked down. And I was wondering, what were your feelings about that?

EB: Sad. And yet, it was something that we felt it would benefit us as far as support. Because we would be putting up those apartments with no additional cost. When it was finished, it would be an additional income for us. No need to worry about how we're going to live when we're at this age, and don't have to depend on Social Security in its entirety, because we have, or had at that time, this outside income.

MK: So, while the house was being knocked down and the apartment units were being built, where were you folks staying?

EB: We stayed at my sister's home up in Kapahulu on George Street. It was a little rough because she had a two-bedroom house, and she and her two boys, and me and my two boys and my daughter. But the good thing about it was, my husband worked on the ship and he would go out Friday and don't come in until Monday morning. So he would take the boys with him on the ship and take them on his trip. So, the house was a little breathable when they weren't there. During the week, my two nephews were athletes also. So my brother-in-law would go with them for their football practice. And then, my husband is off, he's with our boys practicing, too. Because my son graduated from Roosevelt in '55, so I don't know whether he was playing on the JV [junior varsity] team at that time or whether he was already into varsity. But that's where we stayed for one year until the place was finished.

MK: And then, where were the apartments being built? Your apartment units? On. . . .

EB: Kuhio [Avenue] side.

MK: What kind of units were they?

EB: All one-bedrooms and ours was a three-bedroom.

MK: Later on, you said that you folks also built apartment units on the Cartwright [Road] side.

EB: No, no. Cartwright [Road] side was built first. See, because when we had the property, Cartwright [Road] property was up for sale by

a Mr. Donnelly. So we bought the property from him. This was just after the war, about 1947, '48, '49, somewhere around there. We put up the apartments at that time. We put up four, two up and two down. However, we had planned on putting up four and four, but we couldn't get the loan, see. So, we kept cutting it down, make another loan thing. No, it couldn't work. We cut it down again to. . . . Finally, we got it. So, we built a four-unit. Two upstairs and two down. Then, we had a back portion which we were able to set up four garage stalls. So I said to my husband one day, "You know, that spot upstairs is just going to waste." Because the apartment was a two-story anyway. All we had to do was extend the top one and strengthen this lower part with posts, and then we could put a two-bedroom. So we put a two-bedroom up there. And so, that meant that last one, that two-bedroom was practically just about, oh, ten feet away from our building on the Kūhiō [Avenue] side.

MK: Okay. So you had apartments on the Cartwright [Road] side; later on, apartments on the Kūhiō [Avenue] side.

EB: Kūhiō [Avenue] side, right.

MK: And you always lived in one of the units.

EB: Uh huh, uh huh [yes].

MK: The three-bedroom unit. And how did you locate your tenants? How did you get your tenants?

EB: Oh, I put ads in the paper. Sometimes, if somebody was moving out, a friend of theirs would come to see us, wanting that same apartment. We gave ourselves credit because my husband and I kept it in immaculate shape. My husband is a handyman where he could do just about anything. If somebody moves out, we go in to check. We check the whole thing. If we don't think it's clean enough, we repaint the whole thing ourselves. We'd paint it, we'd scrub it. Because my restrictions were: I want that oven scrubbed, I want the toilet, and the shower, and the basin scrubbed spotless, and the kitchen part. Because I felt the living room, anybody could clean that, that's no problem. It's the kitchen and the bathroom that's important to me. So, if I go in to check them out, I have their deposit. If I don't think it's clean enough, they don't get their deposit until they go back and reclean it. I'll point out the different areas that I think is dirty.

However, you still have people that are smarter than you. You know, they'd burn your mattress, and then they turn it over. So, when you go over to inspect it, the mattress looks fine. So when my new tenant move in, she'll say, "Mrs. Bader, would you come over here, please." She said, "I just want you to know that I didn't do this. It was already here." She turns it over, and there's that thing. Or, they'd burn the---see, we had linoleum on the floor in addition to asphalt tile. They would burn the linoleum, and then

push that part under the bed so I can't see it. You know, all of these things is part of renting. That's the kind of problems you had when you're renting. And I had excellent tenants.

MK: What were some of the good things about being a . . .

EB: We ended up good friends. Every time we had Christmas, we'd all have a party. I had the biggest lanai, naturally, because I was on this side here and I had a three-bedroom. So, we'd have potluck for Christmas over here, and we'd have Thanksgiving over here, and we'd have birthdays over here. In order to have a party where you won't disturb your tenants, you invite everyone. So everyone comes, but they liked us well enough where we'd even have a luau. We'd tell the tenants, "Park your car out in the park." You know, the zoo parking or out in the street. "Because we're going to use your parking stall for tables." And they all agreed we're going to do that. One guy's an electrician. He sets up all the lights. The other guy is a bartender. He sets up the bar, gets that all going. We really, really enjoyed that.

Many years after, when my husband and I decided---we went up for my son's graduation at Purdue, we visited all of these people that were our tenants. And it's just like visiting a family because you know them so well. That's the way we were. I learned how to cook Japanese food because I had Japanese tenants. And they learned how to eat Hawaiian food because they'd come over here and we'd have all of that over here, and they would eat it. So, that's the whole thing. So, we really got along very well.

MK: During that time, the '50s, what other families also built apartments in this area?

EB: Ewalikos. Ewalikos did that and the one next door to us right here, Miura. He built on the other side, because you know the houses you looked at, that was the only three units over here. See, it was two two-bedrooms, one here, one that you saw. In between the two bedrooms was a two-car garage. On top of the two-car garage was a studio. So when the war started, and everybody was looking for a place to live, they took out the cars and put another studio down there. And then, they built the one-bedroom apartments next door.

MK: Oh, so that was some of the changes that took place . . .

EB: And Spencer's property. Whoever bought it from them put up apartments, too. And the one next to that. The one next to that is also, I found out, the owner of the one next to Ewalikos on the <u>'Ewa</u> side. Chinese family, but you never get to see them, you know.

MK: So with the neighborhood changing with the apartments coming up, what other changes did you notice during that . . .

EB: The hotels came up.

MK: . . . time, '50s?

EB: Well, the '50s, I don't think was very much. Because when we did our lease for the development here, we did it because we saw the hotels coming up. And they were going up, like this one was going up. Queen Kapi'olani [Hotel].

MK: So, let's see, let's go back a little bit. [Nineteen] sixty-eight, '69, you signed the papers for developing Crescent Park.

EB: Yes, yes. That's right.

MK: So, you're talking about that time period?

EB: That time, yeah.

MK: Why did you folks decide to do that?

EB: Because my husband and I, my husband especially, I felt was getting older. And to do repairs on our apartment building would have been much more difficult for him because he was getting older. To get somebody to come and do it was getting more expensive. If we rented or leased the property, we would have the same amount of money coming in per month that we were getting for rents. So we decided to go that way. On top of that, our apartment was only two-story high. These were coming up twenty-two stories. This one over here is another twenty-two stories. And here we are, down here. I said to my husband, "You know, I don't think it's worth it." I said, "It'll take the work away from you." Every time we'd go on a trip, we'd have to get one of the tenants to take care the yard, another one to go and collect the rent. You know, all of this thing, where you didn't have to do it. All we did was, (EB claps hands) boom, close the door, and off we go. So that was the reason why we decided to do that. Ewalikos at one time wanted to do that, but they wanted to lease only the property. I don't know whether that has gone through or not.

MK: And then, in your case, are there other families involved in developing this particular . . .

EB: Just the developer himself.

MK: Just the developer?

EB: Yeah, Axel Ornellas is his name. He was the developer. His grandparents owned that property right out here where Scandia is. That was the Rasmussen family. So, he did theirs. At that time, he must have heard from somebody that we might be interested. Because he wrote us a letter telling us that he had thought that we might be interested, and if so, to get in touch with him. So, that's what we did. But then, he had to buy Kosaki [property] and the Hawaiian Electric property, but he would get ours in a lease to him. See, so he owns half and we own half. Because the total was

20,000 square feet, until they set us back on Kūhiō Avenue.

MK: That happened when the widening occurred?

EB: Yeah.

MK: When did the widening occur?

EB: I don't know. About '79, I think. I'm not sure. Because it took them so long. Just as long as they're doing the other end of Kūhiō now.

MK: And so, now, as we move into the 1970s, were there any other major changes that come to mind in this vicinity?

EB: I don't think so. Because Ing's apartments came up, also. And all of us were right here. This was first, and then, I think, Ing came up after that. But see, the developer has four condos. We are the fourth. Number one is Scandia. Number two is Scandia Towers, right here at the corner of Paoakalani [Avenue] and Cartwright [Road]. The third one, it's on Aloha [Drive]. Sea-something or other. And then, Crescent Park. So we felt that by the time he got to the fourth building, a lot of the errors that he made wherever, if ever, would be improved on this. But we still found errors in here. Our apartments were built by our contractor. After it's all finished, I said, "Now, why didn't we do this?" Well, okay, if we do it again, we're going to do something else. So, built again, we find something else that we should have done another way. Then we built our beach house down at the other side of the island, we find things down there, too. So I said, "I swear, you can build ten times and every time there is something that you forgot to do." At least, I think so. Unless you get a super architect that stays right with your contractor throughout. But that's hard to say.

MK: Now that, you know, you've practically lived all your life in Waikīkī, right?

EB: Right.

MK: What are your feelings about having lived your life in Waikīkī?

EB: I love it. I think that the reason for that is, this is the only place I've lived. Now, when we first built our first set of apartments, we had four, and then we had the two, and then we had ours on this side. But I had said to my husband, "When that first one is partially paid, we'll go out and buy a house for us and the three kids." And we could live by ourselves. No tenants coming knocking on your door, "I lost my key. Can you let me in?" You know, stuff like. . . . But when that time got close, my oldest boy was about fifteen. And then, I thought, "Why are we going to another expense, and this boy is going to leave home in another two or three years?" And then, we're going to have two. Then the next one is going to leave home, and the next one is. And here we are, with a

huge three-bedroom house. Because we were planning on going all the way. That would mean a bath for the two boys, and a bath for the girl's bedroom, and a bath for our bedroom, and a lanai, and a swimming pool, and the whole bit.

But first of all, I've always wanted Kāhala, but then when I found it was lease land, I didn't want it. I wanted fee-simple or I didn't want to fiddle. So, we went up to Kāhala Heights. Straight up Sixteenth Avenue. Well, we took the kids up with us one day. They took one look at all the lots up there which we were supposed to choose. Money was no problem. We had our own contractor already. He said, "Go pick the one you want, and then we'll talk turkey."

Immediately the kids said, "We don't want to live up here."

I said, "Why? Look how nice this place is. You can look over the city."

"I don't want to live up here. How are we going to the beach every day?"

Well, you know, that did it. So, I said to my husband, "You know, if we do this, the kids will never be home with us. They'll be down the beach." So, we decided because of the boys' age, the kids' age, and if we went through all that expense and the kids all leave home, like now, we going to end up selling it and going into a smaller place like we are now. So we decided not to do it. But they were the ones that, more or less. . . . And we were very close. The kids were.

MK: You know, as you look back, you've seen all these changes happening in Waikīkī. If you could change something that's happened, what would you change?

EB: I'd cut all the buildings down to no higher than ten stories. Because to me, these forty stories, thirty-two stories, and up, that is the thing that I dislike most of all in Waikīkī. But as far as the buildings are concerned, I don't mind. I don't mind the buildings because they are really in many cases a big improvement to what was there before they became, because of the people not taking care of their properties. The houses, their yards, were not cared for. Some of them. I don't say all of them. But I just felt that the hotels went too far, which goes back to the government. They should have made a law that you couldn't go higher. Well, then their excuse was the amount of money they're paying for it, this is the only way they can get their money back. But if they couldn't go that high, they couldn't buy that much at that price and whoever was selling it would have to accept it if they really want to sell it. Or, the closer you are to the beach, the lower you are to the ground. Because the condos back of you will then have some view of the ocean which they don't right now. You build one here, we put this one, boom, this one comes twenty-two stories. You just blanked right out.

And that's just like on the Kūhiō [Avenue] side. My two boys' units on that side was just beautiful. They looked right up into St. Louis Heights, Wilhelmina Rise. They could see St. Louis High School, Lē'ahi Home. Then that Diamond Head Vista came out. She just blocked the whole thing. Then the Banyan Tree came up. And then, the Waikīkī Sunset came up. Now you have a Queen's Garden that came up. The whole thing is blocked out. Parkview came up. That's all after we were. Parkview and ours came up, I think, about the same time. But we moved in here in 1970. But that's what I would do.

MK: And then, you know, like Waikīkī has always kind of been known as a tourist area.

EB: Yeah, it is.

MK: What are your feelings about tourism and Waikīkī?

EB: I don't know. I have mixed feelings about that. Moneywise, that's the best thing for us because they're keeping us alive, I would say. But as a kid, the only way you could come to the islands is by boat. And as a kid, we always thought of the tourists as rich people and they had to be. Now we get (very average type) people. You know, because they're coming here on a tour plan of, say, $400, five days at the hotel. So what do they do? I see them right in this hotel. They're eating right by their beds. They are not the kind that would be a normal tourist that has the money to travel. This is a different class of people that are coming now. The others would stay at the Royal [Hawaiian Hotel]. They would stay at the Halekūlani. They would stay at Niumalu [Hotel] and Hawaiian Village, and all that. They had the money. They never went to all of these cheap little places to eat or to go to the shows. They stayed right in the hotel, they enjoyed themselves. If they went out, they would go to Young Hotel up to the roof garden and have dinner up there and the dance. The choice of things were different than they are now.

Now, they walk the street and they go to Woolworth to have dinner, or they go to Benny's to have lunch, or Zippy's to have something, but it isn't the same class of people. The cheaper they make the airplane rides, the more people we're going to get here of a different class. However, all of our trips to the Mainland, as soon as you say you're from Hawai'i, you're in. Because to them, this is paradise. "I've got to go there. I just have to go to Hawai'i."

I'm thinking, "Oh, boy."

But that's the whole thing, I feel, first of all. I think when we were in Europe, there was a limit to the buildings there, particularly in France, Paris, that you couldn't go over ten stories.

MK: You know, I'll close the interview here, but I was wondering is there anything that you'd like to add onto the tape right now?

EB: I don't know. You mean about the tourists?

MK: About yourself, your family, life in Waikīkī or . . .

EB: Oh, for me, my husband is from the Big Island, and he has always, I would say, want to go back there. But I could never see living any other place but here. I'll go up there for a vacation. I'll even stay up there maybe one or two months, but to me, this is home. I feel that way because a lot of things in this room belongs to my mother, and I'm just carrying it on. It either belongs to my mother, to my sister, or my husband's painting from where he comes from on the Big Island. And so, what do I want to do up on another island? But he is from there, and so he would like to go. I said, "Oh, God, and you got to go down that far to the beach." I'm criticizing the whole thing. So when we were first married, he was offered a job on one of the ranches as an accountant. He came home and he told me about that. We only had one baby at the time. My mother got all excited. She said, "Why don't we go? That's in Waimea." That was a beautiful area. She said, "Why don't we go?"

I said, "I'm not going anywhere." We were in the old house at the time. I said, "Hey, you want to go, he wants to go. You go with him. I'm going to stay right here." Well, that just killed the whole story. But my reason for not wanting to go there, particularly if you have children, is education. I felt that was an important thing. I might not have made a big thing of myself, but I wanted my kids to. I thought, if we were living there, I'd have to send them here for boarding. That means you're away from your kids and they're away from you, where you don't have that closeness that every family should have. At least, I thought so. If they were really sick, you'd have to bring 'em back down here for doctors and hospitalization or whatever it is. Or if my mother got sick, we'd have to bring her back. So, I said, "Why should we go up there when all the conveniences are here? Go up there for vacation, but come home." And I said, "This is a place where it's fully paid. You have no mortgage to pay. Albert is able to fix whatever repairs that is necessary. We don't need to go anywhere." So, my mother gave up. My husband gave up, too. So, his only contact was his going up by working on the ships. But still, we're still here. I would never [leave]. You know, people will ask me, "How do you like living in a condo?"

I said, "I just love it." The only time I miss having a house is when we go out to somebody's house and it's real lush, and it's furnished beautifully. I'm thinking, "Wow, I wouldn't mind having something like this." Yet, when you get home, "Eh, I'm not really that interested in it." Because you're happy with what you have. I'm not trying to be a millionaire. I just want to be comfortable, you know. So, that kind of thing doesn't bother me at all.

But I keep telling him. You know, like he says, "When you retire, I'm going to get me another job." Because he retired before me.

So, I said, "Fine." I thought, "Chee, that's perfect. Then I'll be home by myself, see." Well, I've been off now, '83, '84, I'm on '85. I said to him, "Ey, when are you going look for a job?"

He looks at me and he smiles, you know. But then in my heart, I don't want him to work now. He's too far on, you know. But as long as he sits down and makes net like that, I don't mind. Because that's something he's right at home, he can do it, and that would be it. But he likes our yard downstairs. So, he's the one that does the cleaning. He enjoys that, except when the Haoles come and steal the flowers from the plants, and he gets angry about that. But that's part of living, you know.

MK: So, in a way, by living here, you're still at your old homesite.

EB: Yes.

MK: And you have especially the conveniences of a house, a yard . . .

EB: Right, right. We have all of it. And I look at the zoo. I can remember it the way it was before. I look at the zoo's parking area, and I could remember as when it used to be that river going up the street. All the different things, like there was a beautiful home at the corner of Lemon and Kapahulu on the upper side. Because the lower side was that Japanese Osawa?

MK: Ozaki?

EB: Ozaki, mm hmm. And Ozaki, at the corner, was apartment houses, two-story, but they were all sort of built in any old way. And then he [Ozaki] was right next, and he had a beautiful home where you drive right in and come right out. You know, that's the kind of house he had over there. But across the street where Queen Kapi'olani is right now, there was this royal--at least, they tell me it was royal--the family there was a Widemann family. And Mrs. Widemann was supposedly a sister to Princess Kawānanakoa. Every time they would come down to visit, they'd have this chauffeur on this limousine. We'd stand there and think, "Oh, isn't that something?" You just think that, "That's the best I've ever seen." Because they're right up there, you know.

So when the boy got married, their maid asked my sister and I whether we wanted to go over and help her. They were having a big buffet set up for the wedding. And this is all royalty that came. The Kahana---well, I don't know about the Kahanamokus, but the Kawānanakoas, and the Shingles, all the wheels. When we got there, God, they had a table about the length of this room, about that wide, and all the gifts that was on it was just sparkling. Sterling silver, irons, dishes, glasses. My sister and I would look at that because although we didn't have all of that, naturally we never knew anybody would eat out of something like that on a normal day. Because we'd eat off whatever we had, but it wasn't that fancy. I'd say to my sister, "Wow, look at the dishes that they have."

She said, "Gee whiz. Don't you dare drop any." Because we were the ones that were supposed to help her in the kitchen, see. Then, they'd have a bell on the table, and they'd shake the bell, and I forgot her name. She'd go in and get whatever they wanted, and come back out, and tell us what they want. My sister and I would put it in a dish or put it in a glass, and she'd take it out. But that was their family which was, I would say, quite wealthy.

Then the Cunha family at the corner was wealthy, too. Not as much. Not as much royal blood or whatever. Then next to the Cunha was the Lemon family. Then next to the Lemon was the Mossman family. But that was the whole bit. I was just told the other day that the Mossman family has been the smartest one out there. They didn't sell the property, they leased it. Is that true?

MK: That, I'm not sure. I'm going to be seeing Lemon "Rusty" Holt tomorrow, so maybe I can find out.

EB: Oh, really? He's good friends with my son, even though he's as old as he is. Because he used to play football for Kam [i.e., Kamehameha] School when I was little girl.

MK: I think I'm going to end the tape here.

EB: Okay.

MK: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

WAIKĪKĪ, 1900 - 1985:
ORAL HISTORIES

Volume I

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
Social Science Research Institute
University of Hawai'i-Mānoa

June 1985